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THE

CHESTER PLAYS:

A COLLECTION OF

MYSTERIES

FOUNDED UPON SCRIPTURAL SUBJECTS,

AND FORMERLY REPRESENTED BY THE TRADES OF CHESTER
AT WHITSUNTIDE.

EDITED BY

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CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Mysteries and Miracle Plays of the middle ages possess an interest not only as illustrating the history of the stage in its infancy, but as pictures of the manners and condition of our forefathers, and also as indicating the quantity and the peculiar character of the religious knowledge inculcated into the populace in Catholic times. The Chester Plays complete the publication of the different series of such productions in the English language hitherto generally known. It is perhaps desirable that the few single plays of a similar character that are found scattered in different parts should be collected together in a volume, to form a companion to the others. I think it probable also that other sets exist: one, said to be the oldest yet known, was brought to light at the Strawberry Hill sale, and it is sincerely to be hoped that it will be published.

The earlier history of the stage in the middle ages is obscure, and much confusion has been created by applying to theatrical exhibitions passages of Latin writers which referred only to the performances of the minstrels and jongleurs.* We find dramatic pieces of this kind at a very early period in Latin: they appear to have formed a kind of scholastic exercises among the younger monks, and were performed in the open church. In these performances, the dialogue was short and simple, and the chief effect seems to have been caused by the dumb show. They were acted in the course of the church service on particular festivals, and the people of the neighbourhood, as well as the monks, appear to have been spectators. The earliest examples of such compositions now known are three plays written in France by Hilarius, an Englishman, and disciple of the famous Abelard, the subjects of which are the raising of Lazarus, a miracle of St. Nicholas, and the history of Daniel: they were written early in the twelfth century.† Another small collection of these pieces, apparently of the twelfth century, was found in a MS. at Orleans, and consist of four Miracles of St. Nicholas, and of six similar plays founded on incidents of the New Testament—the Three Kings, the Slaughter of the Innocents, the Resurrection, the Appearance of Christ to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, the Conversion of St. Paul, and the Resurrection of Lazarus.* These latter form the skeleton of the larger series of plays on Scripture subjects with which we meet at a later period, and they contain more minute directions for acting than those given in the *Ludi* of Hilarius. A few other Latin plays of the same description, and probably of nearly the same date, still exist; and, from the allusions to them in the old ecclesiastical writings, it appears that they were very popular during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

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* We may quote, as an instance of this misapplication, a passage of the Polycraticus of John of Salisbury, in which he speaks of the indecent exhibitions of the jongleurs.

† Hilarii Versus et Ludi. 12° Lut. Par. 1838 (edited by M. Champollion-Figeac). In my note on the Chester Play of Lazarus, I have omitted to mention the Latin play of Hilarius on the same subject.

The general term for these performances in Latin was *ludus;* the French plays of a similar caste were called *geus*, or *jeux* (a word derived from the Latin *jocus*); and a similar name (*plays*) was at a later period in England given to these and all other dramatic performances. In the earlier ages, the most common subjects of such representations were the miracles said to have been performed by the popish saints, particularly those of St. Nicholas, and these were characterized as *miracula*, *miracles*, or *miracle plays*. On the contrary, those which were founded on Scripture subjects, and which were intended to set forth the *mysteries* of the Christian revelation, were distinguished by the title of *mysteria*, or *mysteries*. In France, the distinction between *miracles* and *mysteries* was carefully preserved to the latest times. In England, as early as the fourteenth century, there appears to have been some confusion in the application of these terms, and the name of *miracles* was given frequently to all kinds of Scripture plays as well as to plays of saints' miracles. Perhaps this arose from the circumstance of the *miracles of saints* having been long the most popular subjects. It may be observed here, that we must not confound the popular religious performances with certain *ludi* (plays or games), of which we have no very distinct account, which were at times performed with greater or less pomp in the courts of princes and powerful barons.

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* Early Mysteries, and other Latin poems of the Twelfth and Thirteenth centuries. Edited by Thomas Wright, &c. 8vo. London, 1838. Some further information on the Latin mysteries will be found in the introduction to this volume.

Miracle plays and mysteries were composed and performed in French at least as early as the thirteenth century, of which period, besides several dramatic miracles and one or two dramatic pieces of another kind, we have a fragment of a mystery of the Resurrection, first published by M. Jubinal, and since inserted in the Théâtre Francais au Moyen Age of MM. Monmerqué and Michel. It is not probable that any such pieces were performed or composed in English before the fourteenth century. In the reign of Edward II., it is said of the wearers of the extravagant fashions in dress then in vogue,

> Hii ben degised as turmentours that comen from clerkes plei ;*

i.e, as the clerks who were disguised to represent executioners, persons who acted a very prominent part in the early French plays on the miracles of saints. About the middle of the same century, *miracles* are mentioned in Piers Ploughman as being then of frequent occurrence: and in Chaucer, and other writers of the end of the century, they are spoken of more frequently. I have already observed that the early Latin religious plays were performed by the monks; the performers continued to be clerks or persons attached to the church up to a late period, as appears from the poem just quoted.* Chaucer, in the *Milleres Tale*, describing "joly Absolon," the parish clerk, says—

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* Political Songs, p. 336.

> Sometime to shew his lightnesse and maistrie,
> He plaieth Herode on a skaffold hie.

The early religious plays, in their simpler form, were played in the churches, and the scene was laid in different parts of the building. This appears from the stage-directions to some of the Latin mysteries. It is difficult to say at what time they began first to be acted on stages; but in a story taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth, but probably composed in the thirteenth century, we find an incident which seems to show that the practice of performing these plays on stages in the open air was then common, and that they were attended by crowds of people.† It appears from other sources that the spectators paid for the sight: either seats were purchased, or a collection was made. At a later period we find that these stages were placed upon carts, that there were different floors or partitions to represent heaven, earth, and hell, and that very intricate and ingenious machinery must have been used to produce different effects.* Masks were also used, at least in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; so that the whole performance must have borne considerable analogy to the rude Greek comedy in the days of Thespis. The extracts from old parish and town registers relating to these plays, given in Sharp's Dissertation on Pageants, show us what care was taken to give to such performances as much "stage effect" as possible. I have somewhere read of charges for coals to keep up hell fire; and that on one occasion hell itself took fire and was nearly burnt down. Among Mr. Sharp's extracts from the books of accounts, we find among the articles of expenditure — "Item, payd for mendyng hell mought, ij^{d}."—"Item, payd for kepyng of fyer at hell mothe, iiij^{d}." — and, "payd for settyng the world of fyer, v^{d}." †

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* However, in the fifteenth century, if not earlier, a great part of the performance appears to have been conducted by laymen.

† Et dum in prato longissimo super fluvium elongati essent par duo miliaria, viderunt ante se in eodem prato maximam multitudinem hominum congregatam, quos nunc silentes, nunc cachinnantes audiebant. Admirantes igitur quare in loco tali tanta esset hominum adunatio, æstimabant ibi spectacula celebrare quæ nos *miracula* appellare consuevimus. Latin Stories, p. 100.

From a very early period, the stricter churchmen appear to have looked upon these performances with an evil eye, and they are forbidden by some of the older local constitutions and councils.‡ Some observations on this subject by William de Wadington, an Anglo-Norman trouvère of the thirteenth century, are worth citing, for the information they give on the mode of performing the religious plays at that time, although they have already been quoted by Price in a note to Warton's History of English Poetry:—

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* See the instances given from the French mysteries in the notes at the end of this volume.

† See Sharp's Dissertation on Pageants, pp. 57, 73, 74.

‡ See some examples quoted in the introduction to my Early Mysteries and other Latin Poems.

Un autre folie apert
Unt les fols clers cuntrové;
Qe *miracles* sunt apelé.
Lur faces unt là deguisé
Par visers, li forsené,
Qe est defendu en decrée;
Tant est plus grant lur peché.
Fere poent representement,
Mès que çeo seit chastement,
En office de seint eglise,
Quant hom fet la Deu servise,
Cum Jhesu Crist le fiz Dée
En sepulcre esteit posé,
Et la resurrectiun,
Pur plus aver devociun.
Mès fere foles assemblez
En les rues des citez,
Ou en cymiters après mangers,
Quant venent les fols volonters,
Tut dient qe il le funt pur bien:
Crere ne les devez pur rien,
Qe fet seit pur le honur de Dée,
Einz del deable pur verité.
[MS. Harl. No 273, fol. 141.]

These verses seem to show that it was about this time that the religious plays began to be played abroad on stages, and not in the churches. Among the followers of Wycliffe at the end of the fourteenth century, the cries against these performances were much louder. In the Reliquiæ Antiquæ will be found both a song * and a sermon* against the acting of miracle plays; and the latter is a remarkably curious illustration of the early history of the stage in England. They were again condemned by the puritans of the sixteenth century, not only as idle diversions, but as relics of popish superstition; yet, in spite of all attempts to put them down, they continued in practice till the beginning of the seventeenth century. The excuses made in the "banes" of the Chester Plays for their popish character are sufficiently amusing.

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* Reliquiæ Antiquæ, i., 322.

The original object of these performances was of course to impress the knowledge of certain parts of ecclesiastical and scriptural history on the minds of the more ignorant portion of the laity. On the day of a particular saint, as for instance St. Nicholas, the minds of the auditors who attended on his commemorative service were edified by a scenical representation of some one of his miracles: while on a great feast day, Christmas, Easter, Corpus Christi, &c., the mysteries of the New Testament were equally appropriate. When these compositions were written in Latin, a language which the greater portion at least of the spectators did not understand, it was sufficient to give a few sentences of simple dialogue, and the effect was produced by the acting. But when the religious plays were written in the language of the populace, more art was employed in the construction and embellishment of the piece, and droll characters and ridiculous speeches were introduced in order to produce mirth. It appears from the Latin story quoted in a preceding page, that the whole audience was frequently thrown into a fit of laughter (*nunc silentes nunc cachinantes*); and in most of the earlier French miracle plays we find scenes that are well calculated to excite mirth. In the early Jeu de S. Nicolas of Jean Bodel, this effect is produced by the vulgar conversation of a party of gamblers in a tavern. In some of the miracle plays it is peasants or messengers, in others the executioners (or *tormentours*), and in many it is the devils, who create laughter by their coarseness or their drollery. In the regular series of Scripture mysteries these scenes occur frequently, and most of them will be found indicated in the notes to the present volume. Here also the devils are often grotesque characters; but the laughable scenes are more frequently disputes between Cain and his man, or between Noah and his wife, the rustic acts and sayings of the shepherds, or the expedition of Herod's knights to slaughter the defenceless innocents. The gross language frequently put into the mouths of the women give us but a mean opinion of the delicacy of manners among the middle and lower classes in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

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* Reliquiæ Antiquæ, ii., 42.

As far as we can judge by comparison of different pieces still extant on the same subject, we are led to believe that in general they were composed independently, and that one was seldom an imitation of another. They appear in most cases to have been written for local use, and not to have been carried abroad from the neighbourhood in which they were usually acted. The analogy of other classes of literature leaves little doubt in my own mind that in the thirteenth century the Mysteries performed in England were composed in French, or Anglo-Norman, and I think it not improbable that the "clerkes pleyes" mentioned in the poem of the reign of Edward II. were acted in the same language.[*] How far the English sets of Mysteries, which we find in the fifteenth century, and which perhaps existed in the fourteenth, were translations from French originals, I am inclined to doubt: but if any were so, the Chester Mysteries appear to have the greatest claim to that distinction. In the notes to the present volumes I have shown several instances of similarity between these Chester plays and some of the printed French Mysteries of the earlier half of the sixteenth century, which I suspect to be only reproductions of or alterations from older French compositions of the same description. Mr. Collier had previously pointed out one or two remarkable coincidences in passages taken from the Chester and French Mysteries, in his History of Dramatic Poetry (vol. ii., pp. 132, et seqq.). The first instance is the speech of Adam (p. 25 of the present volume), of which some lines are nearly identical with the corresponding passage in the Mystère du Viel Testament, of which an edition appears to have been printed as early as 1490.

I see well, Lorde, through thy grace,	*Hoc nunc os de ossibus meis,*
Bone of my bones thou her mase,	*Et caro de carne mea.*

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[*] I consider that the well-known piece on the Harrowing of Hell, found in three MSS. of the time of Edward II. and beginning of the reign of Edward III., is not a dramatic piece, but a mere poem in dialogue, like the very curious poem of which a fragment is printed in the Reliquiæ Antiquæ, vol. i, p. 145.

And fleshe of my fleshe shee hase,	Ses os sont de mes os formez,
And my shape through thy sawe :	Et sa chair de ma chair venue.
Therfore shee shalbe called iwisse,	Car tout d'un sang sont conformez,
Virragoo nothinge amisse ;	Selon qu'elle est de moy cogneue,
For out of man tacken shee is,	Dont pourtant qu'elle est d'homme yssue,
And to man she shall drawe.	Sera appellée *virago,*
	Pour ce que je l'ay apperceue,
	Quia sumpta est de viro.

The two following instances, cited by Mr. Collier, involve a still more remarkable similitude both of idea and phrase. Abraham being on the point of sacrificing his son, Isaac exclaims (p. 70) —

Father, I praye you hyde my eyne,	Mais vueillez moy les yeulx cachier,
That I see not the sorde so keyne ;	Affin que le glaive ne voye ;
Your strocke, father, would I not see,	Quant de moy veudrés approchier,
Lest I againste yt grylle.	Peultetre que je fouyroye.

And (p. 85), Balaam's ass says—

Am not I, master, thyn owne asse,	Balaam, suis-je pas ta beste,
To beare thee wheither thou wylte passe,	Sur qui tu a tousjours esté,
And manye wynters readye was ?	Tant en yver comme en esté ?
To smyte me yt is shame.	Te feiz jamais telle chose ?
* * * * *	
Ne never yet so servied I thee.	

I think, however, that these single passages in a large body of pieces are not sufficient to prove a direct translation or imitation. The argument deduced from the circumstance of Octavian and the Three Kings being introduced speaking French has I think still less force : it is only a picture of the age when French was the language of courtiers in the English court.*

The original date and the authorship of the Chester Plays have been subjects of considerable discussion. My own impression, from the phraseology and forms of words which may frequently be discovered in the blunders of the modern scribes, is that the original manuscript from which they copied was of the earlier part of the fifteenth or of the end of the fourteenth century. The traditions adopted or imagined by some old Chester antiquaries, which carried the composition of these plays so far back as the mayoralty of John Arneway, (1268 to 1276) and the supposition of Warton that they were the productions of Ralph Higden, the chronicler, appear to me too improbable to deserve our serious consideration, unless they were founded on more authentic statements or on more substantial arguments. The oldest account of these plays now known is found in the following proclamation, of which a copy is given in the Harleian MS., No. 2013.

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* I have omitted to give in the note the version of the French speech of Octavian (p. 101,) as it stands in MS. Harl. 2124, which appears to approach nearest to making sense:—

Seigneurs tous si assembles
Ames proles estates
Jey posse faire larment et leez
Et metten en languore
Nous toutes si prest ne sortes
De fayre intentes movolentes
Car Jhesu soveraigne bene sages
Et demaund emperour.

Jay si personne mille si able
Jei su tent faire et beable
En tresarois ne tresagait
Mes de toile plerunt
Destret et sage su en cownsell
A mi on dame et on prael
Declare sake et mater frail
Un teel nest pas unmaine.

The proclamtion for Whitsone playes, made by W^m^ Newall, clarke of the Pendice, 24. Hen. 8. W^m^ Snead 2^nd^ yere maior.

For as much as ould tyme, not only for the augmentation and increese of the holy and catholick faith of our Saviour Jesu Christ, and to exort the mindes of comon people to good devotion and holsome doctrine therof, but also for the comenwelth and prosperity of this citty, a play and declaration of divers storyes of the Bible, beginning with the Creation and fall of Lucifer, and ending with the generall Judgment of the world, to be declared and played in the Whitsonne weeke, was devised and made by one S^r^ Henry Frances, somtyme moonck of this monastrey disolved, who obtayning and gat of Clemant, then bushop of Rome, a 1000 dayes of pardon, and of the bushop of Chester at that tyme 40 dayes of pardon graunted from thensforth to every person resorting, in peaceble maner with good devotion, to heare and see the sayd playes from tyme to tyme, as oft as the shall be played within the sayd citty (and that every person or persons disturbing the sayd playes in any maner wise to be accused by the authority of the sayd pope Clemants bulls, untill such tyme as he or they be absolved therof), which playes were devised to the honor of god by John Arnway, then maior of this citty of Chester, his bretheren and whole cominalty therof, to be brought forth, declared, and played, at the cost and charges of the craftesmen and occupations of the sayd citty, which hitherunto have from tyme to tyme used and performed the same accordingly.

Wherfore M^r^ maior, in the kings name, stratly chargeth and comandeth that every person and persons, of what estate, degree, or condition so ever he or they be resorting to the sayd playes, do use themselves peaciblie, without making any asault, affray, or other disturbance, wherby the same playes shall be disturbed, and that no maner of person or persons, whiche so ever he or they be, do use or weare any unlawfull weapons within the precinct of the sayd citty during the tyme of the sayd playes (not only upon payn of cursing by authority of the sayd pope Clemants bulls, but also) upon payne of enprisonment of their bodyes, and making fine to the king at M^r^ maiors pleasure.

In a note at the end of this proclamation, written in a later hand than the proclamation, which itself appears to be of the end of the sixteenth century, we find a statement to the following effect:—

S^r^ J^o^ Arnway, maior 1327 and 1328, at which tyme these playes were written by Randall Higgenett, a monk of Chester abby, and played openly in the Whitson weeke.

From the notes collected by Mr. Collier, and published in his interesting History of Dramatic Poetry, it appears that these Mysteries were, to a certain degree, proscribed after the Reformation, in spite of which, however, they continued to be acted at intervals. From the superscription to the *Banes* in the MS. written in 1600, and printed at the beginning of the present volume, it would appear that there was a revival of the performance of the Chester Plays in that year. These *Banes* repeat the story of their composition in the mayoralty of Arnway, by a monk of Chester named "Randoll:" and appear to have been intended to supersede the proclamation of the reign of Henry VIII. given above.

Among other notes relating to the antiquities of Chester, there has been fortunately preserved a description of the mode in which the Mysteries were performed at a time when they had, in all probability, lost very little of their primitive character. Archdeacon Rogers, who died in 1595, and saw the Whitsun Plays performed at Chester in the preceding year, gives the following account of the mode of exhibition.*

> The time of the yeare they weare played was on Monday, Tuesday, and Wensedaye in Whitson weeke. The maner of these playes weare, every company had his pagiant, or parte, which pagiants weare a high scafolde with 2 rowmes, a higer and a lower, upon 4 wheeles. In the lower they apparelled them selves, and in the higher rowme they played, beinge all open on the tope, that all behoulders mighte heare and see them. The places where they played them was in every streete. They begane first at the abay gates, and when the firste pagiante was played, it was wheeled to the highe crosse before the mayor, and so to every streete; and soe every streete had a pagiant playinge before them at one time, till all the pagiantes for the daye appoynted weare played: and when one pagiant was neere ended, worde was broughte from streete to streete, that soe the mighte come in place thereof, excedinge orderlye, and all the streetes have theire pagiantes afore them all at one time playeinge togeather; to se which playes was greate resorte, and also scafoldes and stages made in the streetes in those places where they determined to playe theire pagiantes.

The same writer, in another MS. quoted by Mr. Sharp, gives the following additional details.

> The manner of which playes was thus: they weare divided into 24 pagiantes, according to the companyes of the cittie, and every companye brought forthe their pagiant, which was the cariage or place which the played in. And thei first beganne at the Abbaye gates; and when the firste pagiante was played at the Abbaye gates, then it was wheled from thense to Pentice, at the hyghe crosse, before

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* MS. Harl. No. 1948, fol. 48, r°. It is stated in the same place that the first nine were performed on the Monday, the nine following on the Tuesday, and the seven remaining plays on the Wednesday.

the maior, and before that was donne the seconde came, and the firste went into the Watergate Streete, and from thense unto the Bridge Streete, and so one after an other till all the pagiantes weare played appoynted for the firste daye, and so likewise for the seconde and the thirde daye. These pagiantes or cariges was a highe place made like a howse, with 2 rowmes, beinge open on the tope: the lower rowme theie apparrelled and dressed themselves, and the higher rowme theie played; and thei stoode upon vi. wheeles; and when the had donne with one cariage in one place, theie wheled the same from one streete to another.

It is not easy to account for the number of transcripts of the Chester Plays which were made in the closing years of the sixteenth century and at the beginning of the seventeenth. Five copies made during this period are still preserved. The first of these was written in 1591, by "Edward Gregorie, a scholar of Bunbury," and is now in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire; the two next in date (now MS. Additional. in the Brit. Mus. No. 10,305, and MS. Harl. No. 2013) were written by George Bellin in 1592 and 1600; a fourth was written by William Bedford, in 1604, and is now in the Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley, No. 175; and the latest in date (MS. Harl. No. 2124) was written in 1607 by James Miller. All these transcripts, made by persons who were not well acquainted with the language of the original MS. from which they copied or with palæography in general, are full of errors, which could only be partially eradicated by a careful collation of them all, a work of so much labour that it would hardly be repaid by the result. The present text is taken from the MS. of 1592, with a few corrections from that of 1600, from which also several lacunes and the whole of the "banes" have been supplied. In the notes I have given the various readings of these two manuscripts, together with a few from the transcript of 1607 (MS. Harl. No. 2124). In these notes, I have been content to give a few popular illustrations, with glosses on the less common words, as it appeared to me probable that the latter would be useful to a large portion of the readers among whom this book will circulate. Many of the obsolete words appear to be so much disfigured by the modern scribes, that I had not ventured to assign a meaning, which could only have been done by guess.

Three of the plays of this collection had been previously printed: Noah's Flood and the Slaughter of the Innocents (from the earliest Harleian MS.) by Mr. Markland for the Roxburghe Club, and The Advent of Antichrist (from the MS. belonging to the Duke of Devonshire) in a privately printed but very interesting volume by Mr. Collier.*

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* Five Miracle Plays, or Scriptural Dramas. Privately printed, under the care of J. Payne Collier, F.S.A. Small 8vo., London, 1836 (only 25 copies printed). I have omitted to state in my note on the History of Abraham, in the present volume, that, in the collection just mentioned, Mr. Collier has published a play on the same subject, found in a MS. in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

THE CHESTER PLAYS.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS,
From a beautiful illuminated missal of the 15th century, in the possession of M. le Colonel Theubet.

THE

CHESTER PLAYS.

PROEMIUM.

The readinge of the Banes, 1600.

The Banes which are reade beefore the beginninge of the playes of Chester, 4 June, 1600.

Reverende lordes and ladyes all,
That at this tyme here assembled bee,
By this messauge understande you shall
That some tymes there was mayor of this citie
Sir John Arnway, knighte, who moste worthilye
Contented hymselfe to sett out in playe
The devise of one Done Rondall, moonke of Chester Abbey.

This moonke, moonke-like, in Scriptures well seene,
In storyes travilled with the beste sorte,
In pagentes set fourth apparently to all eyne
The olde and newe testament, with livelye comforth,
Interminglinge therewith, onely to make sporte,
Some thinges not warranted by any writt,
Which to gladd the hearers he woulde men to take yt.

This matter he abrevited into playes twenty-foure,
And every playe of the matter gave but a taste,
Leavinge for better learninge the scircumstance to accomplishe
For all his proceedinges maye appeare to be in haste,
Yet all together unprofitable his labour he did not waste ;
For at this daye and ever he deserveth the fame
Which all monkes deserves, professinge that name.

These storyes of the Testamente at this tyme, you knowe,
In a common Englishe tongue never read nor harde ;
Yet therof in these pagentes to make open shewe,
This moonke and moonke was nothinge afreayde
With feare of hanginge, breninge, or cuttinge off heade,
To sett out, that all maye disserne and see
And parte good be lefte, beleeve you mee.

As in this citie divers yeares the have bene set out,
Soe at this tyme of Penticoste, called Whitsontyde,
Allthough to all the citie followe labour and coste,
Yet God guiving leave that tyme shall you, in playe,
For three dayes together, begyninge one Mondaye,
See these pagentes played to the beste of theire skill ;
Wher to supplye all wantes shalbe noe wantes of good will.

As all that shall see them shall moste welcome be,
Soe all that here them wee moste humble praye
Not to compare this matter or storie
With the age or tyme wherin we presentlye staye,
But in the tyme of ignorance, wherin we did straye ;
Then doe I compare that this lande throughout
Non had the like, nor the like dose sett out.

If the same be likeinge to the comens all,
Then our desier is to satisfie, for that is all our game ;
Yf noe matter or shewe therof speciall
Doe not please, but misslike the most of the trayne,

Goe backe, I saye, to the firste tyme againe;
Then shall you fynde the fyne witt at this day aboundinge,
At that day and that age had verye small beinge.

Condempne not our matter where grosse wordes you here,
Which ymporte at this day small sence or understandinge,
As some tyme postie lewtie, in good manner, or in feare,
With such like, wilbe uttered in there speeches speakeinge.
At this tyme those speeches carried good likeinge,
Tho at this tyme you take them spoken at that tyme;
As well matter and wordes, then, is all well and fyne.

This worthy knighte, Arnway, then mayor of this citie,
This order toke, as declare to you I shall,
That by twentye-fower occupations, artes, craftes, or misterie,
These pagentes shoulde be played, after breeffe rehearsall;
For everye pagente a cariage to be provyded withall;
In which sorte we porpose, this Whitsontyde,
Our pageantes into three partes to devyde.

1. Nowe, you worshippfull tanners, that of custome olde — Worsh^ll tanners.
The fall of Lucifer did set out,
Some writers awarrante your matter, theirfore be boulde,
Erstelye to playe the same to all the rowtte;
And yf any therof stande in any doubte,
Your authour his auther hath, your shewe let bee
Good speech, fyne players, with apparrill comelye.

2. Of the drapers you the wealthy companye, — Drapers.
The creation of the worlde, Adam and Eve,
Accordinge to your wealth, set out wealthilye,
And howe Cayne his brother Abell his life did bereave.

3. The good symple water-leaders and drawers of Deey, — Water-leaders. Drawers in Dee.
See that your arke in all poyntes be prepared;

Of Noy and his children the wholl storye,
And of the universall floude, by you shalbe played.

Barbers.
Wax chaundlers.

4. The sacriffice that faythfull Abraham to his sonne should make,
You, barbers and waxe chaundlers of aunciente tyme,
In the fourth pageante with paines you doe take,
In decente sorte set out; the storie is ffine;
The offeringe of Melchesedecke of breade and wine,
And the preservation therof, set in your playe,
Suffer you not in any poynte the storye to take awaye.

Cappers.
Linen drapers.

5. Cappers and lynnen drapers, see that you fourth bringe,
In well decked order, that worthy storie
Of Balaam and his asse, and of Balacke the kinge;
Make the asse to speake, and sett yt out livelye.

Wrightes.
Slaters.

6. Of Octavion the emperour, that coulde not well alowe
The prophesye of auncient Sibell the sage,
You wrightes and sklaters, with good players in showe,
Lustelye bringe fourth your well decked carriage:
The beirth of Christe shall all see in that stage:
Yf the Scriptures awarrant not of the mydwyfes reporte,
The authour telleth his authour, then take it in sporte.

Painters.
Glassiers.

7. The appearinge angell and starr upon Christes beirth
To sheapeardes poore, of base and lowe degree,
You painters and glasiors decke out with all meirth,
And see that *Gloria in excelsis* be songe merelye.
Fewe wordes in that pageante makes meirth truely,
For all that the alter had to stande uppon,
Was glorye to God above, and peace one earth to man.

Merchants vintners.

8. And you, worthy marchantes vintners, that nowe have plenty of wine,
Amplifye the storie of those wise kinges three,

That through Herodes lande and realme, by the starre that
did shine,
Sought the sighte of the saviour that then borne shoulde
bee.

9. And you, worshippfull mercers, though costely and fyne, Worll. mercers.
Yee tryme up your cariage as custome ever was;
Yet in a stable was he borne, that mighty kinge devyne,
Poorely in a stable, betwixte an oxe and an asse.

10. You, gouldesmythes and masons, make comely shewe, Goldsmiths.
Howe Herode did rage at the retorne of those kinges,
And how he slewe the small tender male babes,
Beinge under two yeares of age.

11. You, smythes, honest men and of honest arte, Smiths.
Howe Christe amonge the docters in the temple did dispute,
To set out in playe comely yt shalbe your parte,
Get mynstrills to that shewe, pipe, tabarte, and flute.

12. And nexte to this you, bowchers of this citie, Buchers.
The storie of Sathan, that Christe woulde needes tempte,
Set out as accostamablie have yee,
The devill in his fethers all ragger and rente.

13. The death of Lazarus and his riseinge againe, Glovers.
You, of glovers the wholl occupation,
In pâgente with players orderly, let yt not be paine
Finely to advaunce after the beste fashion.

14. The storye howe that to Jerusalem our Saviour toke the Corvisors.
waye,
You, corvisors, that in nomber manye bee,
With your Jerusalem carriage shall set out in playe;
A commendable true storye and worthy memorye.

Bakers.

15. And howe Christe, our Savyour, at his last super
Gave his bodye and his bloude for redemption of us all,
You, bakers, see that with the same wordes you utter,
As Christ hym selfe spake them, to be a memoriall
Of that death and passion which in playe ensue after shall.
The worste of these stories doe not fall to your parte;
Therefore, caste god looves abroade with a cheerfull harte.

fflechers.
Bowyers.
Coopers.
Stringers.
Ironmongers.

16. You, ffletchers, boweyers, cowpers, stringers, and iremongers,
See soberly ye make of Christes dolefull death,
His scourginge, his whippinge, his bloude shedde and passion,
And all the paines he suffered till the last of his breath:
Lordinges, in this storye consisteth our cheeffe ffayth.

Cookes.

17. As our beleeffe is that Christe, after his passion,
Descended into hell, but what he did in that place,
Though our authour sett fourth after his opinion,
Yet creditt you the best learned, those doth he not disgrace:
We wishe that of all sortes the beste you ymbrace;
You, cookes, with your carriage see that you doe well
In pagente sett out the harrowinge of hell.

Skinners.

18. The skynners before you after shall playe
The storye of the resurrection,
Howe Christe from death rose the thirde daye,
Not altered in many poyntes from the olde fashion.

Sadlers.
ffusterers.

19. The saddlers and ffusterers shoulde in theire pagent declare
The appearances of Christe his travayle to Emaus,
His often speach to the women and to his disciples deere,
To make his riseinge againe to all the worlde notorious.

Taylours.

20. Then see that you, telers, with cariage decente
The storye of the Assention formablye doe frame,
Wherby that gloryous body in cloudes most orient
Is taken up to the heavens with perpetuall fame.

21. This of the olde and newe Testament to ende all the storye ffishmongers.
Which our aulter meaneth at this tyme to have in pleaye,
You, ffishemongers, to the peagent of the holy ghoste well see,
That in good order yt be donne, as hath bene all waye.

22. And after those ended yt doth not the storye staye, Shermen.
But by prophettes sheweth fourth howe Antichrist should rise;
Which you, shermen, sett out in moste comely wise.

23. And then you, diers and hewsters, Antechrist bringe out, Diers. Hewsters.
First with his docter that godlye maye expounde,
Who be Antechristes the worlde rounde aboute,
And Enocke and hely persons walkinge one grounde,
In partes set you well out the wicked to confounde;
Which beinge understanded Christes worde for to bee,
Confoundeth all Antechristes and sextes of that degree.

24. The cominge of Christe to geve eternall judgement, Wavers.
You, weavers, last of all your parte is for to playe;
Domesday we call yt, when the Omnipotente
Shall make ende of this worlde by sentence, I saye.
One his righte hande to stande God grante us that daye,
And to have that sweete worde in melodye,
'Come hether, come hether, *venite benedicti.*'

To which rest of wayes and selestiall habitation
Grante us free passage, that all together wee,
Accompanied with angells and endlesse delectation,
Maye contynually laude God and prayse that kinge of glorye.

Amen. *finis. Deo gracias. per me Georgium Bellin,* 1600.

I. THE FALL OF LUCIFER.

The tanners playe, beinge the . . . .

[*Pagina prima de celi, angelorum, et infirne sp'un creacion* (sic) *pagina.*]

GOD.

Ego sum alpha et o, primus et ultimus.

It is my will yt shoulde be soe,
Hit is, yt was, it shalbe thus:
I am greate God gracious,
Which never hade beginninge.
The wholle foode of parenté
Is sette in my essencion;
I am the tryall of the Trenitye,
Which never shalbe twyninge;
Pearles patron imperiall,
And *patris sapiencia.*
My beames be all bewtitude,
All blesse is in my buildinge,
All myrth lyeth in mansuetude
Cum dei potentia.
Bouth viscible and inviscible,
As God greateste and gloryous,
All is *in mea licentia;*
For all the mighte of the magistie
Is magnified in me:
Prince, principall, provyde
In my perpetuall provydense.

I was never but one,
And ever one in three,
Sette in my substanciall southnes,
Which, in selestiall sapience,
The three tryalles in a throne,
And trewe Trenitie,
Be grounded in my God heade,
Exsaulted by my excelencye.
The mighte of my makinge is marked in me,
Dissolvemus under a dieadem,
By my devyne experiens.
Nowe seith I am soe solempe,
And sett in my solotacion,
A biglye blesse heare will I builde,
A heaven without endinge,
And caste a comlye compas,
By comlye creacion,
Nine orders of angelles
Be ever at onste dese[ndinge.]
Doe your indever, a[nd doubte you not,]
Under my domyn[acion,]
[To sytt in celestiall saftye:]
[All solace to your sendinge.]
[For all the likeinge in this lordshipp]
[Be laude to my laudacion;]
[Through might of] my moste magistie,
[Your meirth shall] ever be mendinge.

LUCIFFIER.

Lorde, through thy mighte thou haste us wroughte
Nine orderes heare, that we maye see,
Cherubyn and Seraphyn through thy grace,
Thrones and dominaciones in blesse to be,
With principates that order brighte,
And potestates in blissful lighte,

Alsoe vertutes through thy greate mighte,
Angell, also arckeangele.
Nine orderes nowe heare be witterlye,
That thou haste made heare full righte;
In thy blesse full brighte the be,
And I the principall, Lorde, heare in thy sighte.

GOD.

Heare have I you wroughte, with heavenly mighte,
Of angelles nine orderes of greate bewtye;
Ich one with other, as it is righte,
To walke aboute the Trenitie:
Nowe, Lucifier and Lightborne, loke lowlye you be,
The blessinge of my begyninge
I geve to my operacion.
For crafte nor for cuninge,
[Cas]te never comprehencion;
Ausculte you not to excelente,
Into highe exsaltacion;
Loke that you tende rightewislye;
For hense I wilbe wendinge.
The worlde, that is bouth voyde and vayne,
I forme in the formacion,
With a dongion of darckenes,
Which never shall have endinge.
This worcke is nowe well wroughte
[By my] devyne formacion;
[This w]orcke is well donne,
[That is] soe cleane and cleare,
[As I you] made of naughte:
[My blessinge] I geve you heare.

ANGELIS.

[Wee thanke thee, Lorde,] full soveraignlye,
[That us hath formed soe] cleane and cleare,

[Ever in this blesse to byde] thee bye;
[Graunte us thy grace ever to] byde heare.

ARCKEANGELIS.

Heare for to byde God grante [us grace;]
To please this prince withouten [peare,]
Hym for to thanke with some solace,
A songe nowe lett us singe in feare.

a songe *Dignus Dei.*

GOD.

Nowe seeinge I have formed you soe fayer,
And exaulted you so excelente,
And heare I sett you nexte my cheare,
My love to you is soe fervente.
Loke you fall not in not dispayer;
Touch not my throne by non assente;
All youer bewtye I shall appayre,
And pryde fall oughte in youer intente.

LUCIFIER.

Naye, Lorde, that will we not indeede,
For nothinge treasspass unto thee;
Thy greate God-heade we will ever dreed,
And never exsaulte our selfes soe hye.
Thou haste us marked with greate mighte and mayn,
In thy blesse ever more to byde and be,
In lastinge life our life to leade,
And bearer of lighte thou haste made me.

LIGHTBORNE.

And I am marcked of that same moulde:
Lovinge be to our Creator,
That us hath made gayer then goulde,
Under his dyeadem ever to induer.

GOD.

I have forbyde that ye nere shoulde
But kepe you well in that stature ;
The same coveinant I charge you houlde,
In payne of heaven your forfature ;
For I will wende and take my trace,
And see this blesse in everye tower.
Iche one of you kepe well his place,
And, Lucifier, I make thee governoure :
Nowe I charge the grounde of grace,
That it be sette with my order ;
Behoulde the beames of my brighte face,
Which ever was and shall induer.
This is youer health in everye case,
To behoulde youer Creature :
Was never non like me so full of grace,
Nor never shall as my figure.
[Here will I] byde nowe in this place,
[To be] angelles comforture ;
[To be] reviscible in shorte space,
[It is] my will in this same owre.

LUCIFIER.

Aha ! that I am wounderous brighte,
Amonge you all shynning full cleare ;
Of all heaven I beare the lighte,
Though God hym selfe and he were heare.
All in this throne yf that I were,
Then shoulde I be as wyse as hee :
What saye you, angelles, all that be heare ?
Some comforte sone nowe lett me see.

VERTUTES.

We will not assente unto youer pryde,
Nor in our hartes take suche a thoughte ;

But that our Lorde shalbe our guyde,
And kepe that he to us hath wroughte.

Cherubyn.

Our Lorde commaunded all that be heare
To kepe ther seates, bouth more and lesse;
Therfore I warne the, Lucifier,
This pryde will torne to greate destresse.

Lucifier.

Destres! I commaunde you for to cease,
And see the bewtye that I beare;
All heaven shines through my brightnes,
For God hym selfe shines not so cleare.

Dominaciones.

Off all angelles you beare the prise,
And moste bewtye is you befall;
My counscell is that you be wise,
That you bringe not youer selfes in thrall.

Principates.

Yf that ye in thrall you bringe,
Then shall you have a wicked fall;
And also youer ofspringe,
Awaye with you the shall all.

Cheraphin.

Our brethrens counscell is good [to here,]
To you I saye, Lucifier and Lightborne;
Wherfore be ware you of this cheare,
Leste that you have a fowle spurne.

Lightborne.

In fayth, brother, yett you shall
Sitte in this throne, that is cleane and cleare,

That ye mighte be as wise withall
As God hym selfe, yf he were heare;
Therfore you shalbe sette heare,
That all heaven maye you behoulde,
The brightnes of youer bodye cleare
Is brighter then God a thousande foulde.

THRONES.

Alas! that bewtye will you spill;
Yf you kepe it all in youer thoughte,
Then will pryde have all his will,
And bringe youer brightnes all to naughte.
Lett it passe out of youer thoughte,
And caste awaye all wicked pryde,
And kepe youer brightnes to you is wroughte,
And lett our Lorde be all our guyde.

POTESTATES.

Alas! that pryde is the walle of bewtye,
That tornes youer thoughte to greate offence:
The brightnes of youer fayer bodye
Will make you to goe hense.

LUCIFIER.

Goe hense! behoulde, seniors, one everye syde,
And unto me you caste youer eyne:
I charge you, angelles, in this tyde
Behoulde and see nowe what I meane.
Above greate God I will me guyde,
And sette my selfe heare as I wene;
I am pearles and prince of pryde,
For God hym selfe shines not soe shene.
Heare will I sitte nowe in his steade,
To exsaulte my selfe in this same [see;]
Behoulde my bodye, handes, and [head;]

The mighte of God is marcked [in mee ;]
All angelles torne to me, I read,
And to youer soverigne kn[eele one your knee :]
[I ame your] comforte, bouth lorde and heade,
[The meirth] and mighte of the magistie.

LIGHTBORNE.

And I am nexte of the same degree,
Repleth by all exsperience :
Me thinkes yf I mighte sitt hym by,
All heaven shoulde doe us reverence.
All orderes maye assente to thee and me ;
Thou haste them torned by eloquence :
And heare were nowe the Trenitie,
We shoulde hym passe by our fullgens.

DOMINACIONES.

Alas ! why make you this greate offence ?
Bouth Lucifier and Lightborne, to you I saye,
Our sovereigne Lorde will have you hense,
And he fynde you in this araye.
Goe to youer seates, and wende you hense ;
You have begone a parlous playe ;
You shall well witte the subsequens,
This daunce shall torne to teene and traye.

LUCIFIER.

I reade you all, doe me reverence,
That am repleath with heavenlye grace.
Though God come, I will not hence,
But sitte righte heare before his face.

GOD.

Saye, what araye doe you make heare ?
Whoe is youer prince and principall ?

I made thee angell and Lucifier,
And heare thou wouldeste be lorde over all:
Therfore, I charge this order cleare
Faste from this place loke that you fall;
Full soone I shall chaunge youer cheare;
For youer fowle pryde to hell you shall!
Lucifier, who sett thee heare when I was goo?
What have I offended unto thee?
[I] made thee my frinde, thou art my fooe;
[Why] haste thou treasspased this to me?
[Above] all angelles ther were noe moe
[That sitt] so nighe my magistie.
[I charge] you all, falle tell I byde whoo,
[Into the de]epe pitte of hell ever to be.

Nowe Lucifier and [Lightborne fall].

PRIMUS DEMON.

Alas! that ever we were wroughte!
That we shoulde come into this place!
We were in joye, nowe we be naughte.
Alas! we have forfeted our grace.

SECUNDUS DEMON.

And even heither thou haste us broughte,
Into the dongion to take our trace;
All this sorowe thou haste us soughte:
The devill maye speade thy stinckinge face.

PRIMUS DEMON.

My face, false feature, for thy fare,
Thou haste us broughte to teene and traye;
I cumber, I counger, I kindle in care,
I sincke in sorowe, what shall I saye?

Secundus Demon.

Thou haste us broughte this wicked waye,
Through thy mighte and thy pryde,
Out of the blesse that lasteth [aye,]
In sorowe ever more for to abyde.

Primus Demon.

Thy wytte yt was as well as myne,
Of that pryde that we did shewe,
And nowe bene heare in hell fier,
Tell the daye of dome, tell beames blowe.

Secundus Demon.

Then shall we never wante for woe,
But lye heare like towe feendes blacke.
Alas ! that we ever did forgette soe
That lordes love to lose that did us make !

Primus Demon.

And therfore I shall for his sake
Shewe mankinde greate envye ;
As sone as ever he can hym make,
I shall sende hym to destroye.
[One of myne] order shall he be,
[To make] mankinde to doe amisse ;
[Ruff]yne, my frinde fayer and freey,
[Lok]e that thou kepe mankinde from blesse.
That I and my fellowes fell downe for aye,
He will ordeyne mankinde againe
In blesse to be in greate araye,
And we ever more in hell paine.

Secundus Demon.

Out ! harrowe ! wher is our mighte
That we were wounte to shewe,

And in heaven bare so greate lighte?
And nowe we be in hell full lowe!

PRIMUS DEMON.

Out, alas! for woo and wickednes,
That I am soe faste bounde in this cheare,
And never awaie hense shall passe,
But lye in hell allwaye heare.

GOD.

A! wicked pryde, a! wooe worth thee, woo!
My meirth thou haste made amisse;
I maye well suffer, my will is not soe,
That the shoulde parte this from my blesse.
A! pryde! why mighte thou not barste in towe?
Why did the that, why did the thus?
Behoulde, my angelles, pryde is youer fooe,
All sorowe shall shewe wher soe ever yt is.
And though the have brocken my commaundment,
Me rues it sore full soveraignlye:
Nevertheles, I will have my intente,
That I firste thoughte, yett soe will I.
I and towe persons be at one assente,
A solempne matter for to trye:
A full fayer image we have i-mente,
That the same seede shall multiplie.
In my blessinge, heare I begine
The fyrste that shalbe to my paye;
Lightnes and darcknes I byde you tweyne,
The darcke to be Nighte, the lighte to be Daie;
[Keepe] youer course for more or myne,
[And] suffer not to you, I saye,
[But save] youer selfe bouth out and in,
[That is my] will, and will allwaye.

As I have made you all of [noughte,]
Att myne owine wyshinge,
My firste daye heare have I [wroughte,]
I geve yt heare my blessinge.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me, George Bellin. 1592.
Come, Lorde Jesus, come quicklye.

II. THE CREATION AND FALL, AND DEATH OF ABEL.

THE DRAPERS PLAYE.

Incipit pagina secunda, qualiter Deus creavit mundum, et dicat Jesus:

GOD.

Ego sum alpha et o, primus et novissimus.

I God, moste in magistie,
In whom begininge non maye be,
Endles alsoe, moste of postie,
I am and have bene ever.
Now heaven and earth is made through me;
The earth is voyde onlye I see,
Therfore lighte for more lee,
Through my mighte, I will liver.
At my byddinge made be lighte!
Lighte is good I see in sighte,
Tweyned shalbe through my might
The lighte from the sternes.
Lighte Daye I wilbe called aye,
And the sternes Nighte as I saie.
This morne and evine the firste daye
Is made full and expresse;
Nowe will I make the firmamente,
In medeste of the watters to be lente,
For to be a devidente
To twayne the watters aye.

Above the welckine, beneth also,
And Heaven yt shalbe called thoo.
Thus comen is morne and even also
Of the secounde daye.
Nowe will I watteres everye ichone
That under heaven bene greate one,
That the gather into one,
And drynes sone them shewe;
The drynes Earth men shall call;
The gaitheringe of the watters all,
Seas to man have the shall;
Therby men shall them knowe.
I will one earth that erbes springe,
Ich one in kinde seede geivinge,
Treeyes diveres frutes fourth bringe
After their kinde ichone;
The seede of which aye shalbe
Within the frute of ich tree.
[This] morne and even of daies three
[Is bouth co]men and gone.
Nowe will I make, through my [mighte,]
Lightninge in the welcken brighte,
To tweyne the daie from the nighte,
And lighten the earth with lee.
Greate lightes I will towe,
The sonne and eke the moone also;
The sonne for daye to serve for oo,
The moone for nighte to be;
Starres alsoe through myne intente
I will make one the firmamente,
The earth to lighten their the be lente,
And knowen maye be their by;
Courses of planittes nothinge amisse.
Nowe see I this worcke good, i-wysse;
This morninge and even bouth made is

The fourth daye fullye.
Nowe will I in matter fishe fourth bringe,
Foules in the firmamente flyeinge,
Greate whalles in the sea sweminge:
All make I with a thoughte,
Beastes, fowles, frute, stonne, and tree.
Thes worckes are good, well I see,
Therfore to blesse all well liketh me
This worcke that I have wroughte.
All beastes I bydde you multiplie,
In earth, in watter, by and bye,
And fowles in the eare to flye
The earth to fulfill.
Thus morne and even, through my mighte,
Of the fifte day and the nighte,
Is made and ended well and righte,
All at myne owine will.
Nowe will I one earth bringe fourth anon
All helplye beastes everye ichone,
That creepeth, flyne, or gone,
Ichone in his kinde;
Nowe this is done at my byddinge,
Beastes goinge, flyeinge, and creepinge,
And all my worcke at my likinge
Fullye nowe I fynde.

Then God goinge from the place wher he was, comethe to the place wher he createth Adam.

GOD.

Nowe heaven and earth is made ex[presse,]
Make we man to our licknes;
Fyshe, fowle, more and lesse,
To mayster he shall have mighte.
To our shape nowe make I thee;
Man and woman, I will ther be,

Growe and multiplie shall ye,
And fulfill the earth with heighte;
To helpe thee thou shalt have heare
Erbes, treeyes, frute, seede in feare,
All shalbe put in thy power,
And beastes eke also,
All that in earth bene livinge,
Fowles in the ayer flyeinge,
And all that ghoste hath and likinge,
To susteyne you from woo.
Nowe this is donne, I see arighte,
And all thinges made through my mighte,
The seixte daye, heare in my sighte,
Is made all of the beste.
Heaven and earth is wroughte all with wyne,
And all that neddes to be theirin:
To morowe the seventh daye I will solempe,
And of worcke take my reste.
But this man that I have made,
With ghoste of life I will hym gladde.

Heare Adam rissinge, and God saith:

GOD.

Rise upp, Addam, rise up, rise,
A man full of soule and life,
And come with me to Parradise,
A place of daintye and delighte.
But yt is good that thou be wise:
Bringe not thy selfe in striffe.

Then the Creator bringeth Adam into Paradice, before the tree of knowledge, and saith:

Mynstrilles playinge.

GOD.

Heare, Adam, I geve thee this place,
Thee to comforte and solace,

[To] kepe yt well while thou it haste,
[And] done as I thee saye.
Of all treeyes that bene heare[in]
Thou shalte eate and nothinge synne,
But of this treeye for wayle nor wyne
Thou eate by noe waye.
What tyme thou eateste of this tree,
Death thee behoves, beleeve thou me;
Therfore, this frute I will thou fley,
And be thou not towe boulde.
Beastes and fowles that thou maye see,
To thee obediente shall the be;
What name the be geiven by thee,
That name the shall houlde.

Then God taketh Adam by hande, and causeth hym to lye downe, and taketh a reibe out of his sydde, and saieth:

GOD.

It ys not good man onlye to be;
Helpe to hym nowe make we,
But excesse sleepe behoves me
To make one this man heare;
One sleepe thou arte nowe, well I see,
Heare a bonne I take of thee,
And fleshe also, with harte freey,
To make thee a fere.

Then God douthe make the woman of the ribbe of Adam; then Adam, wakinge, sayth to God:

ADAM.

O, Lorde, wher have I longe bene?
For seithen I slepte, moch have I seene,
Wounder that withouten wene
Heare after shalbe wiste.

GOD.

Rise up, Adam, and a wake;
Heare have I formed thee a make:
Her to thee thou shalte take,
And name her as thy leiste.

Heare Adam risinge up, saith:

ADAM.

I see well, Lorde, through thy grace,
Bone of my bones thou her mase,
And fleshe of my fleshe shee hase,
And my shape through thy sawe:
Therfore shee shalbe called, I wisse,
Virragoo nothinge amisse;
For out of man tacken shee is,
And to man she shall drawe.
Of earth thou madeste firste me,
Bouth bone and fleshe nowe I see;
Thou haste her geven through her postie
Of that I in me hade.
Therfore man kindlye shall forsake
Father and mother, and to wife take,
Towe in one flesh, as thou can make
Either other for to gladde.

Then Adam and Eve shall stande nackede, and shall not be ashamed: then the serpente shall come up out of a hole, and the devill, walkinge, shall saye:

DEMON.

Out, owte! what sorowe is this!
That I have loste soe moche blesse:
For ones I thoughte to doe amisse,
Out of heaven I fell.
The brighteste angell I was, or this,
That ever was or yett is;

But pride caste me downe, I wysse,
From heaven righte downe to hell.
[Ghos]tlye Parradise I was in,
[But the]nse I fell through synne.
Of earthly Parradise nowe, as I wene,
A man is geven maisterye.
By Belsabube I will never blyne,
Tell I maye make hym by some gynne
From that place for to twayne,
And treasspas as did I.
Shoulde such a caitiffe made of claye
Have suche blesse? naye, be my laye!
For I shall teach his wife a playe,
And I maye have a wyle.
For her to deceve I hope I maye,
And through her bringe them bouth awaye;
For shee will doe as I her saie,
Her hope I wil begile.
That woman is forbydden to doe,
For anye thinge the will thertowe;
Therfore that tree shall shee com towe,
And assaye which yt is.
Dighte me I will anon tytte,
And proffer her of that same frute,
So shall the bouth for her delighte
Be banished of that valleye.
An manner of an edder is in this place,
That winges like a birde shee hase;
Feete as an edder, a medens face,
Her kinde I will take;
And of the tree of Parradice
She shall eate through my countise.
For wemen the be full liccoris,
That will she not forsake.
And eate shee of yt, full witterlye,

The shall fare bouth as did I,
Be banished bouth of that vallye,
And her ofspringe for aye;
Therfore, as brocke I my pane,
The edders cotte I will putte one,
And into Parradise I will gone,
As faste as ever I maye.
[illegible]

Superius volucris penna, serpens pede, forma puella.

SERPENCE.

Woman, why was God soe nise
To byde you leve for youer delite,
And of iche treey in Parradice
To forsake the meate?

EVA.

Naye, of the frute of iche treey,
For to eate good leeve have we,
Save the frute of one we muste fleye,
Of yt maye we not eate:
This treeye that heare in the mideste is,
Eate we of yt we doe amysse;
God sayde we shoulde dye, i-wisse,
And yf we touch that tree.

SERPENS.

Woman, I saye, leeve not this,
For yt shall you not lose the blesse,
Nor noe joye that is his,
But be as wise as he:
God is subtilte and wise of witte,
And wotte you well when ye eate yt,
Then youer eyes shalbe unknitte,
Like godes you shalbe,
And knowe bouth good and evell alsoe.

Therfore he warned you therfroo,
You maye well wytte he was youer foe.
Therfore doe after me.
Take of this frute, and assaye:
It is good meate, I dare laye,
And but thou fynde yt to thy paye,
Saye that I am false;
And you shall knowe bouth weale and woo,
And be like godes towe,
Thou and thy husbande also,
Eate thou one aple and noe moe.

EVA.

A! Lorde! this treey is fayer and brighte,
Grene and semlye to my sighte;
The frute sweate and full of mighte,
That godes itt maye us make:
One aple of it I will eate,
To assaye which is the meate,
And my husband I will gette
One morscell for to take.

Then Eve shall take of the frute of the serpente, and shall eate theirof, and saie to Addam.

EVA.

Adam, husbande, life and deare,
Eate some of this aple heare,
It is fayer, my lefe feare,
Yt maye thou not forsake.

ADAM.

That is south, Eva, withouten were,
The frute is fayer and sweete in fere;
Therfore I will doe thy prayer:
One morscell I will take.

Then Adam shall take the frute, and eate theirof, and in weepinge maner shall saye followinge:

Out! alas! what ayleth me?
I am nacked well I see;
Woman, cursed moth thou be,
For we be bouth nowe shente:
I wotte not for shame wheither to fleye,
For this frute was forbydden me;
Nowe have I brocken, through rede of thee,
My Lordes commaundmente.

EVA.

Alas, this edder hath done me [nye!]
Alas, her rede why did I?
Nacked we bene bouth for thy,
And of our shape ashamed.

ADAM.

Yea, south sayde I in prophescye,
When thou was tacken of my bodye,
Mans woo thou woulde be witterlye,
Therfore thou was soe named.

EVA.

Adam, husbande, I rede we take
Thes fygge leves for shames sake,
And to our members a hillinge make
Of them for thee and me.

ADAM.

And therwith my members I will hyde,
And under this tree I will abyde;
For suerlye come God us besyde,
Out of this place shall we.

Then Adam and Eve shall cover ther members with leaves, hyddinge them selves under they treeyes; then God shall speake, and mynstrelles playinge:

GOD.

Adam, Adam, wher arte thou?

ADAM.

A! Lorde, I harde thy voyce nowe,
For I am nacked, I make avowe,
Therfore nowe I hyde me.

GOD.

[Who] toulde thee, Adam, thou nacked was?
[Save on]lye thyn owne tresspas,
[That of the] treey thou eaten hase
[That I for]bade thee.

ADAM.

[Lorde, this] woman that is heare,
[That thou] gave me to my feare,
[Gave me] parte, att her prayer
[And of] itt I did eate.

GOD.

Woman, why haste thou done soe?

EVA.

This edder, Lorde, shee was my foe,
And southlye deceved me thoo,
And made me to eate that meate.

GOD.

Edder, for that thou haste donne this anoye,
Amonght all beastes one earth thee by

Cursed thou shalbe for thy,
For this womans sake;
Upon thy breste thou shalte goe,
And eate the earth too and froe,
And enmitye betwene you towe
I insuer thee I shall make.
Betwene thy seede and heres also
I shall excitte thy sorowe and woe,
To breake thy heade and be thy foe
Yt shall have maisterye aye.
No beaste one earth, I thee behette,
That man so littill shall of lette,
And troden be full under his feete
For thy mysdeede to daye.

DEUS AD EVAM.

And, woman, I warne thee witterlye,
Thy payne I shall moch multiplye;
With paynes, sorowe, and greate anoye,
Thy children thou shalte beare.
And for that thou haste done soe to daie,
Man shall maister thee allwaye,
And under his power thou shalbe aye,
Thee for to drive and dere.

DEUS AD ADAM.

And, man, also I saye to thee,
For thou haste not donne after me
Thy wifes counscell for to fley,
But donne to her byddinge,
To eate the frute of this treey,
In thy worke warryed the earth shalbe,
And with greate travill behoves thee
One earth to gette thy livinge.
When thou one earth traviled haste,

Frute shall not growe in that place,
But thornes, breyers, for thy tresspas,
To thee one earth the shall springe;
Erbes and rootes thou shall eate,
And for thy sustinance sore sweate,
With greate messchefe to wyn thy meate,
Nothinge to thy likinge.
Thus shalt thou live, south to sayne,
For thou haste bene to me unbayne,
Ever tell the tyme thou torne againe
To the earth wher thou came froe.
For earth thou arte, as well is seene,
And after thes worckes woe and teene,
To earth thou shalte, withouten wene,
And all thy kinde also.

Heare Adam shall speake movenglye:

ADAM.

30A Alas! nowe in longor am I lente;
Alas! nowe shamlye am I shente,
For I was unobediente;
Of weale nowe am I weined;
Nowe all my kinde by me is kente,
To fleye wemens intisemente;
Whoe trusteth them in anye intente,
Trulye he is deceived.
My liccorise wife hath bene my foe,
The devilles envye hath shente me also:
These towe togeither well maye goe,
The sister and the brother.
His wrath hath donne me moch woe,
Her glottanye hath greved me also;
God lett never man truste you towe,
The one more then the other.

GOD.

Nowe you shall parte from this lee:
Hilled it behoves you to be,
Dead beastes skines, as thinketh me,
Is beste you one you beare;
For deadlye nowe bouth bene ye,
And death maye you noe waye fley;
Such clothes are beste for your degreye,
And such shall you weare.

Then God puttinge garmentes of skynnes on Adam and Eve saith:

GOD.

[Ada]m, nowe thou haste thy willinge,
[For th]ou desiereste over all thinge
Off good and evill to have knowinge,
Nowe wroughte is all thy will:
Thou wouldeste knowe bouth weale and woe,
Nowe is yt fallne to thee soe,
Therfore, hense thou muste goe,
And thy desyer fulfilled.
Nowe leste thou cannot este more,
And doe as thou haste done before,
Eate of this frute to live ever more,
Heare maye thou not be.
To eairth theider thou muste gone,
With travill leade thy life therone,
For siccker ther is noe other wone:
Goe fourth, take Eve with thee.

Then God shall drive Adam and Eve out of Parradice, and saye to the angelles, and mynstrilles shall playe:

GOD.

Nowe will I that ther linge
The angelles order cherubyn,
To kepe this place of weale or wyne,

That Adam loste thus hath,
With sharpe sworde on everye syde,
And flame of fier heare to abyde,
That never a earthlye man in glyde;
Forgeven the bene that grace.

PRIMUS ANGELLUS.

Lorde, that order that is righte,
Is readye sette heare in thy sighte,
With flame of fier readye to feighte
Againste mankinde, thy foe;
To whom no grace is claymed arighte,
Is readye sette heare in thy sighte,
Tell wysdome, righte, mercye, and mighte
Shall bye them and other moe.

SECUNDUS ANGELLUS.

I cherubyn muste ther be coyse
To kepe this place of greate prise,
Seinge man was so unwise
This woninge for to lose,
That he by crafte nor countise
Shall not come in that was his,
But deprived be of Parradise,
Noe more for to come ther.

TERCIUS ANGELLUS.

And in this heritage I wilbe,
Still for ever to see
That noe man come into this cittye,
As God hath me beheighte;
Sowrdes of fier have all we,
To make man from this place to fleye,
From this dwellinge of greate deintye,
That to him firste was dighte.

QUARTUS ANGELLUS.

And of this order I am made one,
From mankinde to weare this wone,
That through his gifte hath gone
This woninge full of grace:
Therfore departe the muste ichone;
Our swordes of fier shalbe ther bone,
And my selfe ther vereye fonne
To flame them in the face.

ADAM.

Minstrelles playinge.

Highe God and higheste kinge,
That of naughte made all thinge,
Beaste, fowle, and grasse growinge,
And me of earth made,
Thou gave me grace to doe thy willinge,
For after greate sorowe and sickinge,
Thou haste me lente greate likinge,
Towe sonnes my harte to glade:
Cayme and Abell, my children deare,
Whom I gate within thirtie yeare
After the tyme we deprived were
Of Parradise for our pride.
Therfore nowe I will them lere,
To make them knowe, in good manere,
What I sawe when Eve my feare
Was tacken of my syde.
While that I slepte in that place,
My ghoste to heaven banished was,
For to see ther I hade grace
Thinges that shal befall.
[To m]ake you ware of cumberous case,
And lett you doinge from tresspas,
Some I will tel before youer face,
But I will not tell all.

I wotte by thinges that ther I see,
That God will come from heaven hie,
To overcome the devill so slye,
And lighte into my kinde;
And my bloode that he will wyn,
That I soe loste for my synne,
A newe lawe ther shal begyne,
And soe men shall them suer.
Watter or fier also witterlye,
All this worlde shall destroye,
For men shall synne soe horably,
And doe full moch amysse.
Therefore, that you maye escape that nye,
Doe well and be ware me by,
I tell you heare, in prophescye,
That this will fall, i-wysse. (INDEED)
Also, I see, as I shall saye,
That God will come the laste daye
To deme mankinde in fleshe vereye,
And flame of fier borninge;
The good to heaven, the evill to hell.
Youer children this talle you maye tell,
This sighte sawe I in Parradice or I fell,
As I laye ther sleppinge.
Nowe will I tell howe you shall doe
Godes lawe to underffoe:
Cayme, husbantes crafte thou muste goe towe,
And Abell a sheaparde be.
Therfore of cornes fayer and cleane,
That growes one rigges out of the reian,
Cayme, thou shalt offer, as I meane,
To God in magistie;
And Abell, while thy life maye laste,
Thou shall offer and doe my heiste,
To God the firste borne beaste,

Therto thou make thee bowne.
This shall you please God Allmighte,
Yf ye doe this well and righte,
With good harte in his sighte,
And good devocion.
Nowe for to gette you sustenaunce,
I will you teache without distance;
For seithen I feelde that mysschaunce
Of that frute for to eate,
My leiffe children, fayer and free,
With this spade that you maye see,
I have doulven, learne you this at me,
Howe you shall wyn youer meate.

Eva.

My sweate children, darlinges deare,
You shall see howe I live heare,
Because unbuxom soe we were,
And did as God woulde not we shoulde;
This payne heare, as hade bene noe neede,
I suffer one earth for my misdeede,
And of this wolle I will spynne thride by thride,
To hill me from the coulde.
Another sorowe I suffer also,
My children I must beare with woe,
As I have donne bouth you towe,
And soe shall wemen all;
This the devill, our bitter foe,
That made us out of joye to goe,
To please God, sonnes, therfore be throoe,
From synne that you maye fall.

Cayme.

Mother, for south I tell yt thee,
A tylle man I am, and so will I be;

As my daddye hath taughte yt me,
I will fulfill his lore.

Heare Cayme bringes in the plough, and saith:

CAYME.

Of corne I have greate pleintie,
Sacrifice to God, sone shall you see,
I will make, to loke yf he
Will sende me anye more.

ABELL.

And I will with devocion
To my sacrifice make me bowne,
The comlieste beaste, by my crowne!
[To] the Lorde I will chouse;
And offer yt before thee heare
Meklye in good manere;
Noe beaste to thee maye be deare,
That maye I not lese.

Heare Adam and Eve goe out tell Cayme hath slayne Abell, and Cayme saith:

CAYME.

I am the elder of us towe.
Therfore, firste I will goe.
Suche as the frute is fallne froo
Ys good enoffe for hym;
This corne standinge, as mote I thee!
Was eaten with beastes, men maye see,
God, thou getteste noe better of me,
Be thou never so gryme.
Thes earles cornes grewe nexte the waye,
Of thes offer I will to daye;
For cleane corne, by my faye!
Of me gettes thou naughte.
Loe, God, heare maye thou see

Such corne as grewe to me;
Parte of yt I bringe to thee,
Anon, withouten lette.
I hope thou wylte whytte me this,
And sende me more of worldlye blesse,
Or elles for south thou dose amysse,
And thou be in my debte.

ABELL.

Nowe, my brother, as I see
Hath donne sacrifice nowe to thee!
Offer I will, as falleth for me,
Such as thou hast me sente:
The beste beaste, as mote I thee!
Of my flocke with harte freey,
To thee offered shall yt be;
Receive, Lorde, my presente.

Then a flame of fier shall descende upon the sacrifice of Abell.

ABELL.

[Ah!] highe God and kinge of blesse,
Nowe southlye knowe I wel by this
My sacrifice accepted is
Before the Lorde to daye;
A flame of fier thou sende haste
From heaven one high into this place;
I thanke thee, Lorde, of thy grace,
And soe I shall doe [aye.]

CAYME.

Out! out! howe have I spente my good,
To see this sighte I waxe nere wood!
A flame of fier from heaven stoode
One my brothers offeringe;
His sacrifice I see God takes,
And myne refuses and forsakes,

My semblante for shame shakes,
For envye of this thinge.

Deus ad Cayme.

Cayme, why arte thou wroth, why?
Thy semblante chaunges wounderouslye;
Yf thou doe well and trulye,
Thou maye have mede of me.
Wottes thou not well that for thy deed,
Yf thou doe well thou maye mede,
Yf thou doe fowle fowle to speade,
And sicker therof to be.
But Cayme, thou shalte have all thy will,
Thy tallente yf thou will fulfill,
Synne of it will thee spill,
And make thee evill to speade;
Thy brother buxom aye shalbe,
And fullye under thy postie;
The luste therof pertaines to thee,
Advise thee of thy deed.

Cayme.

A! well, well, is yt soe?
[Co]me fourth with me, thou muste goe
[Into] the feilde a littill froo;
[I have] an errande to saye.

Abell.

Brother, to thee I am readye
To goe with thee moste meeklye,
For thou arte elder then am I;
Thy will I will doe [aye.]

Cayme.

Saye, thou caittiffe, thou congion,
Weneste thou to passe me of renowne?

Thou shalte fayle, by my crowne!
Of maysterye yf I maye.
God hath challenged me nowe heare,
For thee, and that in fowle manere,
And that shalte thou abyde full deare,
Or that thou wende awaye.
Thy offeringe God accepted hase,
I see by fier that one yt was;
Shall thou never have efte suche a grase,
For dye thou shalte this nighte.
Though God stode heare in this place,
For to helpe thee in this case,
620 Thou shoulde dye before his face:
Have this, and gett thee righte.

Then Cayme killeth his brother Abell, and God cominge to them sayth:

GOD.

Cayme, wher is thy brother Abell?

CAYME.

I wotte nere, I can not tell:
Of my brother wottes thou not well
That I of him hade noe kepinge?

GOD.

What haste thou donne, thou wicked man?
Thy brothers bloode askes thee upon
Vengance, as faste as it can,
From earth to me cryinge.
Cayme, cursed on earth thou shalt be aye,
For the deed thou haste done to daie;
Eairth waryed shalbe in thy worcke aye,
That wickedlye hath wroughte;
And for that thou haste done this mischeffe,

To all men thou shalbe unleffe,
Idle and wanderinge as a theiffe,
And over all sette at naughte.

Cayme *speaketh mournfullye.*

Out, alas! wher maye I be?
Sorowe one iiche syde I see,
For yf I out of lande fley,
From enimyes companye,
Beastes I wotte will worrye me;
And yf I lenge for my lewtye,
I muste be bounde and nothinge freey,
And all for my follye:
For my synne so horable ys,
And I have done so moch amisse,
That unworthy I am, i-wysse,
Forgevnes to attayne.
Well I wotte, wherever I goe,
Whoe so metteth me will me sloe,
And ich man wilbe my foe,
Noe grace for me maye gayne.

God.

Naye, Cayme, thou shalte not dye sone:
Horrablye yf thou have done,
That is not thy brothers bone
Thy bloode for to sheede;
But for south who so ever slayeth thee,
Seven foulde punished shall he be,
And greate payne maye thou not fleye,
For thy wicked deede.
But for thou to this deede was bowne,
Thou and thy children, truste mone,
Unto the seventh generacion
[Be pu]nished for the wholle;

For thou to daye hath done soe,
Thy seede for thee shall suffer woe,
And while thou one the eairth maye groo,
Of vengance have the deale.

Cayme.

Out, out! alas! alas!
I am dampned without grace,
Therfore I will from place to place,
And loke wher is the beste;
Well I wotte, and witterlye,
Into what place that come I,
Iich man will loth my companye,
So shall I never have reste.
Fowle hape is me befall,
Wheither I be in howse or hall,
Cursed Cayme men will me call,
Of sorowes maye non nowe cease.
But yet will I, or I goe,
Speake with my dadde and mam also,
And ther walson bouth towe
I wotte well I muste have:
Mame and dadd, reste you well,
For one fowle talle I can you tell,
I have slayne my brother Abell,
As we fell in a striffe.

Adam.

Alas! alas! is Abell dead!
Alas! ruffull is my read,
No more joye to me is lead,
Save onlye Eve, my wiffe.

Eva.

Alas! nowe is my sonne slayne;
Alas! marred is all my mayne;

Alas! muste I never be fayne,
But in woe and mourninge?
Well I wotte and knowe, i-wysse,
That vereye vengance it is,
For I to God did so moche amysse,
7 Mone I never have likinge.

Cayme.

Then, dame and sire, fare well ye,
For out of lande to lande I will fleye;
A losscell ever I muste be,
For-scapte I am of thrifte;
For so God hath toulde me,
That I shall never thrive nor three;
And nowe I fleye, you all maye see,
I graunte you all the same gifte.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me Georgi Bellin. 1592.
Come, Lorde Jesus, come quicklye.

III. NOAH'S FLOOD.

The Watter Leaders and the Drawers of Dee Playe.

God.

I, God, that all this worlde hath wroughte,
Heaven and eairth, and all of naughte,
I see my people in deede and thoughte
Are sette fowle in synne;
My ghoste shall not linge in mone,
That through fleshe likinge is my fonne,
But tell sixe skore yeaires be comen and gone,
To loke yf the will blyne.
Man that I made I will destroye,
Beaste, worme, and fowle to flye,
For one eairth the doe me nye
The folke that are theirone;
It harmes me sore hurtfullye,
The malice that doth nowe multiplye,
That sore yt greives me hartelye
That ever I made man.
Therfore, Noye, my servante free,
That rightious man arte, as I see,
A shippe sone thou shall make thee
Of treeyes drye and lighte;
Littill chamberes therin thou make,
And byndinge slyche also thou take,
Within and without neye thou slake,
To anoynte yt through all thy mighte.
Three hundreth cubettes it shalbe longe,

And fiftie brode, to make yt stronge;
Of heighte fiftie the nexte thou fonge,
Thus messuer thou this aboute.
One wyndowe worcke through thy wytte,
A cubitte of lengthe and breade make itt,
Upon the syde a dore shall sutte,
For to come in and oute.
Eattinge places thou make alsoe,
Ronette chamberes one or too:
For with watter I thinke to flowe
Man that I can make;
Destroyed all the worlde shalbe,
Save thou, thy wiffe, and children three,
And ther wiffes also with thee,
Shall fal before thy face.

NOYE.

O, Lorde, I thanke thee lowde and still,
That to me arte in suche will,
And spares me and my howsehoulde to spill,
As I nowe southlye fynde.
Thy byddinge, Lorde, I shall fulfill,
And never more thee greve nor grill,
That such grace hath sente me till
Amonght all mankinde.
Have done, you men and wemen all,
Hye you, leste this watter fall,
To worche this shippe, chamber and hall,
As God hath bedden us doe.

SEM.

Father, I am all readye bowne;
An axe I have, by my crowne!
As sharpe as anye in all this towne,
For to goe therto.

CAM.

I have a hacchatt wounder keeyne,
To bitte well, as maye be seene,
A better gronde one, as I wene,
Is not in all this towne.

JAFFETTE.

And I can make well a pynne,
And with this hamer knocke it in;
Goe wee worcke boute dyne,
And I am readye bowne.

NOYES WIFFE.

And we shall bringe tymber too,
For we mone nothinge elles doe;
Wemen be weeke to underfoe
Anye greate travill.

SEMES WIFFE.

Hear is a good hacckinge stoccke,
One this you maye hewe and knocke,
Shall none be idle in this floccke;
Ney nowe maye noe man fayle.

CAMMES WIFFE.

And I will goe gaither slyche,
The shippe for to caulke and pyche,
Amounte yt muste be with stiche,
Borde, tree, and pynne.

JEFFETTES WYFFE.

And I will gaither chippes heare
To make a fier for you in feare,
And for to dighte youer dynner,
Againste your cominge in.

Then Noye begineth to builde the Arcke, and speaketh Noye:

NOYE.

Nowe in the name of God, I begyne
To make the shippe that we shall in,
That we maye be readye for to swyme
At the cominge of the fludde:
Thes bordes heare I pynne togeither,
To beare us saffe from the weither,
That we maye rowe heither and theider,
And saffe be from the fludde.
Of this treey will I make the maste,
Tyed with cabbelles that will laste,
With a saile yarde for iche blaste,
And iche thinge in their kinde:
With toppe-castill, and boe-spritte,
Bouth cordes and roppes I have all mette,
To sayle fourth at the nexte weete,
This shippe is att an ende.
Wyffe, we shall in this vessell be kepte,
My children and thou I woulde ye in lepte.

NOYES WIFFE.

In fayth, Noye, I hade as leffe thou slepte!
For all thy frynishe fare,
I will not doe after thy reade.

NOYE.

Good wyffe, doe nowe as I thee bydde.

NOYES WIFFE.

Be Christe! not or I see more neede,
Though thou stande all daye and stare.

NOYE.

Lorde, that wemen be crabbed aye,
And non are meke I dare well saye;

That is well seene by me to daye,
In wittnesse of you ichone.
Good wiffe, lett be all this beare,
That thou maiste in this place heare;
For all the wene that thou arte maister,
And soe thou arte, by Sante John!

Then Noye with all his familie shall make a signe as though the wroughte upon the shippe with diveres instrumentes, and after that God shall speake to Noye, sayinge:

GOD.

Noye, take thou thy meanye,
And in the shippe hie that you be,
For non soe righte, nor non to me,
Is nowe one earth livinge;
Of cleane beastes with thee to take,
Seven and seven, or then thou slake
He and shee, make to make,
By live in that you bringe.
Of beastes uncleane towe and towe,
Male and femalle, boute moe,
Of cleane fowles seven alsoe,
The hie and shee togeither;
Off ffowles uncleane twene and noe moe,
As I of beastes sayde before;
That man be saved through my lore,
Againste I sende this weither.
Of all meates that mone be eatten,
Into the shippe loke be getten;
For that maye be noe waye forgotten,
And doe all this bydene,
To sustayne man and beaste therin,
Tell the watter cease and blyne.
This worlde ye filled full of synne,
And that is nowe well seene.

Seven dayes be yette cominge,
You shall have space them in to bringe;
After that it is my likinge,
Mankinde for to anoye.
Fourtye dayes and fortye nightes
Raine shall fall for ther unrightes,
And that I have made through my mightes,
Nowe thinke I to destroye.

NOYE.

Lorde, to thy byddinge I am beane,
Seinge noe other grace will gayne,
Yt will I fulfill fayne,
For gracious I thee fynde;
A hundreth wyntter and twentye
This shippe makinge taryed have I:
Yf through amendment thy mercye
Woulde fall to mankinde.
Have donne you men and wemen alle,
Hye you leste this watter fall,
That iich beaste were in stalle,
And into the shippe broughte;
Of cleane beastes seven shalbe,
Of uncleane [two,] this God bade me:
The fludde is nye, you maye well see,
Therfore tarye you naughte.

Then Noye shall goe into the Arcke with all his familye, his wife excepte, and the Arcke muste be borded round about, and one the bordes all the beastes and foules painted.

SEM.

Sir, heare are lions, leapardes, in,
Horses, mares, oxen, and swyne;
Goote and caulfe, sheepe and kine;
Heare sitten thou maye see.

Cam.

Camelles, asses, man maye fynde,
Bucke and doo, harte and hinde,
And beastes of all maner kinde,
Here be, as thinketh me.

Jaffett.

Take heare cattes, dogges too,
Atter and foxe, fillie, mare alsoe;
Hares hoppinge gile can goe,
Heare have coule for to eate.

Noyes Wiffe.

And heare are beares, woulfes sette,
Apes, oules, marmosette,
Weyscelles, squirelles, and firrette,
Heare the eaten ther meate.

Semes Wiffe.

Heare are beastes in this howse,
Heare cattes make yt crousse,
Heare a rotten, heare a mousse,
That standeth nighe togeither.

Cames Wiffe.

And heare are fowles lesse and more,
Hearnes, cranes, and bittor,
Swannes, peacokes, and them before
Meate for this weither.

Jeffattes Wiffe.

Heare are coke, kitte, croes,
Rookes, ravens, manye roes,
Duckes, curlues, whoe ever knowes,
Iche one in his kinde;

Heare are doves, digges, drackes,
Red-shonckes roninge through lackes,
And ech fowle that leden makes
In this shippe nowe maye fynde.

NOYE.

Wiffe, come in: why standes thou their?
Thou arte ever frowarde, I dare well sweare;
Come in, one Godes name! halfe tyme yt were,
For feare leste that we drowne.

NOYES WIFFE.

Yea, sir, sette up youer saile,
And rowe fourth with evill haile,
For withouten fayle
I will not oute of this towne;
But I have my gossippes everyechone,
One foote further I will not gone:
The shall not drowne, by Sante John!
And I maye save ther life.
The loven me full wel, by Christe!
But thou lett them into thy cheiste,
Elles rowe nowe wher thy leiste,
And gette thee a newe wiffe.

NOYE.

Seme, sonne, loe! thy mother is wrawe;
Be God, such another I doe not knowe!

SEM.

Father, I shall fetch her in, I trowe,
Withoutten anye fayle.—
Mother, my father after thee sende,
And byddes thee into yeinder shippe wende.
Loke up and see the wynde,
For we bene readye to sayle.

NOYES WIFFE.

Seme, goe againe to hym, I saie;
I will not come theirin to daye.

NOYE.

Come in, wiffe, in twentye devilles waye!
Or elles stand their all daye.

CAM.

Shall we all feche her in?

NOYE.

Yea, sonnes, in Christe blessinge and myne!
I woulde you hied you be tyme,
For of this flude I am in doubte.

THE GOOD GOSSIPPES SONGE.

The flude comes flittinge in full faste,
One everye syde that spreades full farre;
For feare of drowninge I am agaste;
Good gossippes, lett us drawe nere.
And lett us drinke or we departe,
For ofte tymes we have done soe;
For att a draughte thou drinkes a quarte,
And soe will I doe or I goe.
Heare is a pottill full of Malmsine good and stronge;
Itt will rejoyce bouth harte and tonge;
Though Noye thinke us never so longe,
Heare we will drinke alike.

JEFFATTE.

Mother, we praye you all togeither,
For we are heare, youer owne children,
Come into the shippe for feare of the weither,
For his love that you boughte!

NOYES WIFFE.

That will I not, for all youer call,
But I have my gossippes all.

SEM.

In faith, mother, yett you shalle,
Wheither thou wylte or note.

NOYE.

Welckome, wiffe, into this botte.

NOYES WIFFE.

Have thou that for thy note!

NOYE.

Ha, ha! marye, this is hotte!
[It] is good for to be still.
Ha! children, me thinkes my botte renewes,
Our tarryinge heare highlye me greves,
Over the lande the watter spreades;
God doe as he will.
A! greate God, that arte so good,
That worckes not thy will is wood.
Nowe all this worlde is one a flude,
As I see well in sighte.
This wyndowe I will shutte anon,
And into my chamber I will gone,
Tell this watter so greate wone
Be slacked through thy mighte.

Then the singe.

Then shall Noye shutte the wyndowe of they Arcke, and for a littill space be silent, and afterwarde lokinge rounde aboute shall saye:

NOYE.

Lorde God, in magestie,
That suche grace hath graunted me,

Wher all was borne false to be,
Theirfore nowe I am boune,
My wife, my children, and my meanye,
With sacrifice to honour thee,
Of beastes, fowles, as thou maiste see,
And full devocion.

God.

Noye, to me thou arte full able,
And to my sacrifice acceptable,
For I have founde thee true and stable;
One thee nowe muste I myne;
Warrye eairth I will noe more,
For mans synnes that greves me sore,
For of youth mon full yore
Halfe bene inclynde to synne.
You shall nowe growe and multiplye,
On eairth againe to edifye;
Ich beaste, and fowle that maye flye,
Shalbe feared of you;
And fishe in sea that maye flitte
Shall sustaine you, I thee behitte,
To eate of them ye ne lette
That cleane bene, you mon knowe;
Theras you have eaten before
Treeyes and rootes, since you were bore,
Of cleane beastes nowe lesse and more
I geve you leve to eate;
Save bloode and fleshe bouth in feare,
Of rouge dead carrine that is heare,
Eate you not of that in noe manere,
For that you shall leave.
Man-slaughter [ever] you shall fleye,
For that [is] not pleasante unto me;
The that sheedeth blood, he or shee,

Oughte wher amonge mankinde,
That bloode fowle shedde shalbe
And vengance have, men shall see;
Therfore beware all ye,
You falle not into that synne.
A forwarde, Noye, with thee I make,
And all thy seede, for thy sake,
Suche vengance for to slake,
For nowe I have my will:
Heare I behette thee a heiste,
That man, woman, fowle, ney beaste,
With watter, while this worlde shall laste,
I will noe more spill.
My bowe betweyne you and me
In the firmamente shalbe,
By everye tocken that you shall see,
That suche vengance shall cease.
Man shall never more
Be wasted with watter, as he hath bene before;
But for synne that greveth me sore,
Therfore this vengance was.
Wher cloudes in the welckine bene,
That same bowe shalbe seene,
In tocken that my wrath and teene
Shall never this wrocken be.
The stringe is torned towardes you,
And towarde me is bente the bowe,
That suche weither shall never shewe,
This behighte I thee.
My blessinge, Noye, I geve thee heare,
To thee, Noye, my servante deare;
For vengance shall noe more appeare,
And nowe fare well, my darlinge deare.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me, George Bellin. 1592.
Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye.

IV. THE HISTORIES OF LOT AND ABRAHAM.

The Barbers and the Waxe Chaundlers Playe.

Incipit pagina quarta, qualitur reversus est a cede quatuor regum occurit Rex Salem equitando et Loth, et dicat Abraham.

PRECO DICAT.

All lordinges that be heare presente,
And harcken me with good intente,
Howe Noye awaie from us he wente,
And all his companye;
And Abraham, through Godes grace,
He is comen into this place,
And ye will geve us rombe and space
To tell you of storye.
This playe for south begyne shall he,
In worshippe of the Trenitie,
That you maye all heare and see
That shalbe done to daie:
My name is Gobbete one the Greene,
With you I maie no longer bene:
Fare well, my lordes, bydene,
For lettinge of your playe.

Heare Abraham, havinge restored his brother Lote into his owne place, doth firste of al begine the playe, and saith:

ABRAHAM.

A! thou highe God, graunter of grace,
That endinge nor begininge hath,
I thanke thee, Lorde, that thou hath

To daie geven this victorye.
Lote, my brother, that tacken was,
I have restored hym in this case,
And broughte hym whom in this place
Through thy mighte and maisterye.
To worshippe thee I will nowe wonne;
That fower kinges of uncothe lande
To daye hath sente into my hande,
And riches with greate araye;
Therfore, of all that I have wonne,
To geve thee teath I wil begine;
The cittie sone when I come in,
And parte with thee my praye.
Melchesedecke, that heare kinge is,
And Godes preiste also, i-wysse,
The teath I will geve hym of this,
As skill is that I doe.
God that hath sente me the victorye
Of fower kinges graciouslye;
With hym a praye parte will I,
The cittie when I come towe.

Heare Lote, torninge hym to his brother Abraham, dothe saye:

LOTTE.

Abraham, brother, I thanke thee,
That this daie haste delivered me
Of enemyes handes and their postie,
And saved me from woe;
Therfore, I will geve teathinge
Of my good, while I am levinge,
And nowe also of his sendinge
The teath I will geve also.

Tunc venit armiger Melchesadecke ipsorum, [?] *et gratulando dicat armiger.* Here the Messinger doth come to Melchesedecke, kinge of Salem, and rejoyced greatlye doth saie:

MESSINGER.

My lorde, the kinge tydinges one righte,
Your harte to glade and to lighte,
Abraham hath slayne in feighte
Fower kinges, since he wente ;
Here he wilbe this same nighte,
And riches enoffe with hym dighte.
I harde hym thanke God allmighte
Of grace he had hym sente.

Heare Melchesadecke, lokinge up to heaven, dothe thanke God for Abrahams victorye, and doth prepare hym selfe to goe and presente Abraham:

MELCHESADECKE REX SALEM.

A ! blessed be God that is but one !
Againste Abraham will I gone
Worshippffullye, and that anon,
My office for to fulfill,
And presente hym with brede and wyne,
For grace of God is hym within :
Spede, for love myne,
For this is Godes will.

Here the Messinger doth offer to Melchesadecke a standinge cupe and bredde; doth saye:

Armiger cum pocula.

Ser, here is wyne withouten were,
And here to brede whyte and cleare,
To presente hym with good manere,
That so us holpen hath.

Heare Melchesadecke answeringe, saith:

MELCHESADECKE.

To God I wotte he is full deare,
For all thinges in his prayer

He hath withouten dangere,
And especiallye hys grace.

Here Melchesadecke cominge unto Abraham doth offer unto hym a cupe full of wyne and bredde, and saithe:

Abraham, welckome muste thou be,
Godes grace is fullye in thee;
Blessed ever moste thou be,
That enemyes soe can meeke:
Here is brede and wyne for thy degree,
I have broughte, as you maye se;
Receive this presente nowe of me,
One that I thee beseeke.

Here Abraham, receivinge the offeringe of Melchesadecke, and doth offer Melchesadecke a horse that is laden.

ABRAHAM.

Sir kinge, welckome in good faye,
Thy presente is welckome to my paye,
God hath holpen me to daye,
Unworthy though I were.
You shall have parte of my praye,
That I wane since I wente awaie,
Therfore to thee that take itt maye
The teath I offer here.

Melchesadecke, recevinge the horse of Abraham, vereye gladly doe saie:

MELCHESADECKE.

And your presente, sir, take I,
And honoure yt devoutlye;
For moche good it maie signifie,
In tyme that is cominge.
Therfore, horse, harnes, and petrye,
As falles for your dignitie,

The teath of yt taketh of me,
And receive my offeringe.

Here Lotte dothe offer to Melchesadecke a goodly cupe, and saith:

LOTTE.

And I will offer, with good intente,
Of suche good as God hath me lente,
To Melchesadecke here presente,
As Godes will is to be.
Abraham my brother offred has,
And so will I through Godes grace,
This royall cupe before my face,
Receive yt nowe of me.

Melchesadecke, receivinge the cupe of Loth, saith:

MELCHESADECKE.

Sir, your offeringe welckome is,
And well I wote for south, i-wysse,
That fullye Godes will it is
That is nowe done to daie.
Goe we togaither to my cittye,
And God nowe hartelye thanke we,
That helpes us ever through his postie,
For soe full well we maie.

EXPOSITOR EQUITANDO.

Lordinges, what maye this signifie,
I will expounde it appeartlye,
That the unlearned standinge here by
Maye knowe what this maye be.
This presente, I saye veramente,
Signifieth the Newe Testamente,
That nowe is used with good intente,
Throughout all Christianitie.
In the oulde lawe, without leasinge,

When these towe goodmen were livinge,
Of beastes were ther offeringe,
And eke their sacramente.
But since Christe died on roode tree,
In brede and wyne his death remember we,
And at his laste supper one our mandé
Was his commaundemente.
But for this thinge used shoulde be
Afterwardes, as nowe done we,
In significacion as leeve you me,
Melchesadecke did soe.
And teathinges-makinge, as you seene here,
Of Abraham begonnan were;
Therfore to God he was full deare
And so were both towe.
By Abraham understand I maie
The father of heaven, in good faye;
Melchesadecke, a preste to his paye,
To mynister that sacramente,
That Christe ordeyned the forsaide daie,
In brede and wyne to honor hym aye:
This signifieth, the south to saie,
Melchesadeckes presente.

Here God appeareth unto Abraham, and saithe:

GOD.

Abraham, my servante, I saie to thee
Thy helpe and thy succkore will I be,
For thy good deed moch pleased me,
I tell thee witterlye.

Here Abraham, torninge to God, saith:

ABRAHAM.

Lorde, one thinge thou wouldeste see,
That I praye after with harte free,

Graunte me, Lorde, through thy postee,
Some frute of my bodye;
I have noe childe, fowle ne fayer,
Save my nurye to be my eayre,
That makes me greatlye to appeare.
One me, Lorde, have mercye.

God.

Naye, Abraham, frende, leve thou me,
Thyn nurye thyn heaire he shall not be,
But one sonne I shall sende thee,
Begotten of thy bodye.
Abraham, doe as I thee saye,
Loke and tell, and yf thou maye,
Starres standinge one the straye,
That unpossible were:
No more shalte thou for no nede
Nomber thy bodelye seede,
That thou shalte have, withouten dreede,
Thou arte to me soe deare.
Therfore, Abraham, servante freeye,
Loke that thou be trewe to me,
And here a forwarde I make to thee
Thy seed to multiplie;
So moche more further shalte thou be,
Kinges of thy seede men shall see,
And one childe of greate degreey
All mankinde shall forbye.
I will hensefourth forwarde all waie;
Eiche man childe, one the eighte daie,
Be sircomsiced on the eighte daie,
And thou thy selfe full soone.
Whoe so circomsiced not is,
Forsakeen shalbe with me, i-wysse,

For unobediente that man is:
Loke that this be done.

ABRAHAM.

Lorde, all readye in good faye,
Blessed be thou ever and aye!
For that we knowe maye
Thy folke from other men,
Circumsiced the shalbe all,
Mon for oughte that maye befalle;
I thanke thee, Lorde, thyn owne thrall,
Kneelinge on my knye.

EXPOSITOR.

Lordinges, all take this intente,
What betockens this commaundment;
This was some tyme a sacramente,
In the oulde lawe trewlye tane;
As followeth nowe veramente,
So was this in the Oulde Testamente,
But when Christe died, awaie it wente,
And then begane baptisme.
Also God promysed, behette us heare,
To Abraham his servante deare,
So moche seede, that in no manere
Numbred mighte be;
And one seede mankinde oughte to be,
That was Christe Jesus witterlye,
For of this kinde was our ladye,
And soe also was he.

GOD.

Abraham, my servante, Abraham.

ABRAHAM.

Loe, Lorde, all readye heare I am.

GOD.

Take, Isaake, thy sonne by name,
That thou loveste the beste of all,
And in sacrifice [offer] hym to me
Uppon that hyll their besides thee.
Abraham, I will that it be soe,
For oughte that maye befalle.

ABRAHAM.

My Lorde, to thee is myne intente
Ever to be obediente.
That sonne that thou to me hath sente,
Offer I will to thee,
And fulfill thy comaundmente,
With hartie will, as I am kente.
Highe Lorde God omnipotente,
Thy byddinge shalbe.
My meanye and my children eichone
Leinges at whom bouth all and one,
Save Isaake my sonne with me shall gone
To a hill heare besyde.

Heare Abraham, torninge hym to his sonne Isaake, saith:

Make thee readye, my deare darlinge,
For we muste doe a littill thinge.
This woode doe on thy backe it bringe,
We maye no longer abyde.
A sworde and fier that I will take;
For sacrafice me behoves to make:
Godes byddinge will I not forsake,
But ever obediente be.

Heare Abraham taketh a sworde and fier.

Heare Isaake speaketh to his father, and taketh a burne of stickes and beareth after his father, and saieth:

ISAAKE.

Father, I am all readye
To doe your byddinge moste mekelye,
And to beare this woode full beane am I,
As you commaunded me.

ABRAHAM.

O Isaake, my darlinge deare,
My blessinge nowe I geve thee heare,
Take up this faggote with good cheare,
And one thy backe it bringe.
And fier with us I will take.

ISAAKE.

Your byddinge I will not forsake;
Father, I will never slake
To fulfill your byddinge.

[Heare they goe bouth to the place to doe sacriffice.]

ABRAHAM.

Nowe, Isaake sonne, goe we our waie
To yender mounte, yf that we maye.

ISAAKE.

My deare father, I will asaye
To followe you full fayne.

Abraham, beinge my[n]ded to sleye his sonne Isaake, leiftes up his handes, and saith fowlowinge:

ABRAHAM.

Ho! my harte will breake in three,
To heare thy wordes I have pittye;
As thou wylte, Lorde, so muste yt be,
To thee I wilbe bayne.
Laye downe thy faggote, my owne sonne deare.

ISAAKE.

Al readye, father, loe yt heare.
But whye make you sucke heavye cheare?
Are you anye thinge adreade?
Father, yf yt be your will,
Wher is the beaste that we shall kill?

ABRAHAM.

Therof, sonne, is non upon this hill,
That I see here in steade.

Isaake, fearinge leste his ffather woulde slaye hym, saith:

ISAAKE.

Father, I am full sore afreade
To see you beare that drawne sorde:
I hope for all myddell yarde
You will not slaye your childe.

Abraham comfortes his sonne, and saieth:

ABRAHAM.

Dreede thee not, my childe, I reade;
Our Lorde will sende of his godheade
Some manner of beaste into this feilde,
Either tame or wilde.

ISAAKE.

Father, tell me or I goe
Wheither I shalbe harmede or noe.

ABRAHAM.

Ah! deare God! that me is woe!
Thou breakes my harte in sunder.

ISAAKE.

Father, tell me of this case
Why you your sorde drawne hase,

And beares yt nacked in this place,
Theirof I have greate wounder.

ABRAHAM.

Isaake, sonne, peace, I thee praie,
Thou breakes my harte in [twaie.]

ISAAKE.

I praye you, father, leane nothinge from me,
But tell me what you thinke.

ABRAHAM.

Ah! Isaake, Isaake, I muste thee kille!

ISAAKE.

Alas! father, is that your will,
Your owine childe for to spill
Upon this hilles brinke?
Yf I have treasspasede in anye degree,
With a yarde you maye beate me;
Put up your sorde, yf your wil be,
For I am but a childe.

ABRAHAM.

O, my deare sonne, I am sorye
To doe to thee this greate anoye.
Godes commaundmente doe muste I,
His workes are ever full mylde.

ISAAKE.

Woulde God my mother were here with me!
Shee woulde kneele downe upon her knee,
Prainge you, father, if yt maye be,
For to save my liffe.

ABRAHAM.

O ! comelye creator, but I thee kille,
I greve my God, and that full ylle ;
I maye not worke againste his will,
But ever obediente be.
O ! Isaake, sonne, to thee I saie,
God hath commaunded me to daye
Sacrifice, this is no naye,
To make yt of thy bodye.

ISAAKE.

Is yt Godes will I shalbe slayne ?

ABRAHAM.

Yea, sonne, it is not for to leane ;
To his byddinge I wilbe bayne,
And ever to hym pleasinge.
But that I doe this dilfull deede,
My Lorde will not quite me in my nede.

ISAAKE.

Marye, father, God forbydde,
But you doe your offeringe !
Father, at whom your sonnes you shall fynde,
That you moste love by course of kinde :
Be I ouste out of your mynde,
Your sorowe maie sone seace ;
But yeat you muste do Godes byddinge.
Father, tell my mother for no thinge.

Here Abraham wrynges his handes, and saith :

ABRAHAM.

For sorowe I maie my handes wringe,
Thy mother I can not please.
Ho ! Isaake, Isaake, blessed muste thou be !

Allmoste my witte I lose for thee;
The blood of thy bodye so freey
I am full lothe to sheede.

Here Isaake askinge his father blessinge one his knyes, and saith:

ISAAKE.

Father, seinge you muste nedes doe soe,
Let it passe lightlie, and over goe;
Kneelinge on my kneeyes towe,
Your blessinge on me spreade.
Father, I praye you hyde my eyne,
That I see not the sorde so keyne;
You[r] strocke, father, woulde I not see,
Leste I againste yt grylle.

ABRAHAM.

My deare sonne Isaake, speake no more,
Thy wordes makes my harte full sore.

ISAAKE.

O deare father, wherefore! wherfore!
Seinge I muste nedes be dead,
Of on thinge I will you praie,
Seithen I muste dye the death to daie,
As fewe strockes you well maie,
When you smyte of my heade.

ABRAHAM.

Thy meeknes, childe, makes me affraye;
My songe maye be wayle-a-waie.

ISAAKE.

O dere father, doe awaye, do awaye
Your makeinge so moche mone!
Nowe, trewlye, father, this talkinge

Doth but make longe taryeinge.
I praye you, come and make endinge,
And let me hense be gone.

Here Isaake riseth and cometh to his father, and he taketh hym and byndeth and laieth hym upon the alter to sacrifice hym, and saith:

ABRAHAM.

Come heither, my childe, thou arte soe sweete,
Thou muste be bounde both hande and foote.

ISAAKE.

Father, we muste no more mete,
Be oughte that I maie see;
But doe with me then as you will,
I muste obaye, and that is skille,
Godes commaundmente to fulfill,
For nedes soe must yt be.
Upon the porpose that you have sette you,
For south, father, I will not let you,
But ever more to you bowe,
While that ever I maie.
Father, greete well my brethren yonge,
And praye my mother of her blessinge,
I come noe more under her wynge,
Fare well for ever and aye;
But, father, I crye you mercye,
For all that ever I have trespassed to thee,
Forgeven, father, that it maye be
Untell domesdaie.

ABRAHAM.

My deare sonne, let be thy mones!
My childe, thou greves me ever ones;
Blessed be thou bodye and bones,
And I forgeve thee heare!

Nowe, my deere sonne, here shalt thou lye,
Unto my worke nowe muste I hie;
I hade as leeve my selfe to die,
As thou, my deare darlinge.

ISAAKE.

Father, if you be to me kinde,
Aboute my head a carschaffe bynde,
And let me lightlie out of your mynde,
And sone that I were speede.

Here Abraham doth kisse his sonne Isaake, and byndes a charschaffe aboute his heade.

ABRAHAM.

Fare well, my sweete sonne of grace!

Here let Isaake kneele downe and speake.

ISAAKE.

I praye you, father, torne downe my face
A littill, while you have space,
For I am full sore adreade.

ABRAHAM.

To doe this deed I am sorye.

ISAAKE.

Yea, Lorde, to thee I call and crye,
Of my soule thou have mercye,
Hartelye I thee praie!

ABRAHAM.

Lorde, I woulde fayne worke thy will,
This yonge innocente that lieth so still
Full loth were me hym to kille,
By anye maner a waye.

ISAAKE.

My deare father, I thee praye,
Let me take my clothes awaie,
For sheedinge blude on them to daye
At my laste endinge.

ABRAHAM.

Harte, yf thou wouldeste borste in three,
Thou shalte never master me;
I will no longer let for thee,
My God, I maye not greeve.

ISAAKE.

A! mercye, father, why tarye you soe?
Smyte of my head and let me goe.
I praye ryde me of my woe,
For nowe I take my leve.

ABRAHAM.

Ah, sonne! my harte will breake in three,
To heare thee speake such wordes to me.
Jesu on me! thou have pittye
That I have moste in mynde.

ISAAKE.

Nowe, father, I see that I shall dye:
Almightie god in magistie!
My soule I offer unto thee;
Lorde, to yt be kinde.

Here let Abraham take and bynde his sonne Isaake upon the alter; let hym make a signe as though he woulde cut of his head with his sorde; then let the angell come and take the sworde by the end and staie it, sainge:

ANGELLUS.

Abraham, my servante dere.

ABRAHAM.

Loe, Lorde, I am all readye here!

ANGELLUS.

Laye not thy sworde in noe manere
On Isake, thy deare darlinge;
And do to hym no anoye.
For thou dredes God, well wote I,
That of thy sonne has no mercye,
To fulfill his byddinge.

SECUNDUS ANGELLUS.

And for hys byddinge thou dose aye,
And spareste nether for feare nor fraye,
To doe thy sonne to death to daie,
Isake, to thee full deare:
Therfore, God hathe sente by me, in faye!
A lambe, that is bouth good and gaye,
To have hym righte here.

ABRAHAM.

Ah! Lorde of heaven, and kinge of blesse,
Thy byddinge shalbe done, i-wysse!
Sacrafice sente me here is,
And all, Lorde, through thy grace.
A horned weither here I see,
Amonge the breyers tyed is he,
To thee offred shall he be,
Anon righte in this place.

Then let Abraham take the lambe and kille hym, and let God saie:

GOD.

Abraham, by my selfe I sweare,
For thou haste bene obediente ever,
And spared not thy sonne to teare

To fulfill my byddinge,
Thou shalbe blessed, that pleased me,
Thy seed I shall so multiplie,
As starres and sande so manye heigh I,
Of thy bodye cominge.
Of enemyes thou shalte have power,
And of thy bloode also in feare,
Thou haste bene meke and bonere,
And do as I thee bade;
And of all nacions, leve thou me,
Blessed ever more shall thou be,
Through frute that shall come of thee,
And saved be through thy seede.

Expositor.

Lordinges, this significacioun
Of this deed of devocion,
And you will you witten mone,
Maye torne you to moche good.
This deed you see done here in this place,
An exsample of Jesu done it was,
That for to wyne mankindes grace
Was sacrifised on the roode.
By Abraham, I maie understande
The father of heaven that can founde
With his sonnes bloode to breake that bande,
That the devill had broughte us to.
By Isaake, I maie understande
Jesu, that was obedient aye,
His fathers will to worke alwaie,
And death for to confounde.

Here let the docter knele downe, and saie:

Suche obedience grante us, O Lorde!
Ever to thy moste holye worde,

That in the same we maie accorde
As this Abraham was bayne;
Then al togaither shall we
That worthy kinge in heaven see,
And dwell with hym in greate glorye,
For ever and ever, amen.

Here the messinger maketh an ende.

Make rombe, lordinges, and geve us waye,
And let Balacke come in and plaie,
And Balame that well can saie
To tell you of prophescie.
That Lorde that died on Good Frydaie,
He save you all bouth nighte and daie!
Fare well, my lordinges; I goe my waie,
I maye no longer abyde.

Finis. Deo gratias! per me, Georgi Bellin. 1592.

Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye. Anno 1592.

V. BALAAM AND HIS ASS.

The Cappers and Lynnan Drapers Playe.

Incipit pagina quinta de Moyses et de lege sibi data.

Deus ad Moysen.

Moyses, my servante leiffe and deare,
And all my people that bene heare,
Ye wotten, in Egipte when you were,
Out of thraldome I you broughte;
I will you have no God but me,
No false godes non make ye;
My name in vayne nam not ye,
For that liketh me naughte.
I will you houlde your holye daye,
And worshipe yt eke alwaie,
Father and mother, all that you maie,
And sleaye no man no where.
Fornicacion you shall fleye;
No mens goodes steale ye;
Nor in no place leinge nor be
False wittnesse for to beare;
Your neightbours wyfe desyer you not,
Servante nor good that he hath boughte,
Oxe ner asse, in deede nor thoughte,
Nor nothinge that is his;
Nor wrongfullye to have his thinge
Againste his love or his likinge;
In all thes doe my byddinge,
That you doe not amisse.

MOYSES.

Good Lorde, that arte ever so good,
I will fulfill with mylde mode
Thy commaundment, for I stode
To heare thee nowe full still.
Foretye dayes nowe fasted have I,
That I mighte be the more whorthye
To learne this tocken trewlye;
Nowe will I worke thy will.

Tunc Moyses in monte dicat populo:

Godes folke, dread you naughte,
To prove that God hath us wroughte;
Thinke thes wordes in your thoughte;
Nowe knowe you what is synne.
By this sighte nowe ye maie see
That he is pearles of postie;
Therfore, this tocken loke doe ye,
Therof that ye ne blyne.

DOCTER.

Lordinges, this commaundmente
Was the firste lawe that ever God sente;
Tenne poyntes their bene that takes intente,
That moste effecte is in;
But all that storye for to fonge,
To plaie this month it were to longe,
Therfore, moste frutfull ever amonge,
Shortlye we shall menne.
After we reden on this storye,
That in this mounte of Synaye,
God gave the lawe witterlye,
Wrytten with his hande.
In stonnye tables, as red we,
Before men honoured mamentrye,

Moyses brake them hastelye,
For that he woulde not wonne;
But after, played as you shall see,
Other tables out carved he,
Which God bade wrytten shoulde be,
The wordes he sayde before;
The which tables shryned were
After, as God can Moyses leare,
And that shryne to hym was deare,
Therafter ever more.

DEUS.

Then God appeared againe to Moyses.

Moyses, my servante, goe anon,
And carve out of the rocke of stonne
Tables to wryte my byddinge one,
Such as thou had before:
And in the morninge loke thou hie
Unto the mounte of Synaye;
Let no man wotte, but thou onlye,
Of companye no more.

MOYSES.

Lorde, thy byddinge shalbe donne,
And tables carved out full sone;
But tell me, I praye thee,
What wordes I shall wryte.

DEUS.

Thou shalte wrytte the same lore
That in the tables was before,
Yt shalbe kepte for ever more,
For that is my delite.

Tunc Moyses faciet signum, quasi effoderet tabulas de monte, et super ipsas scribens dicat populo, et dicat:

MOYSES.

Godes people of Isarell,
Harcken all unto my spell,
God bade you shoulde kepe well
This that I shall saie;
Sixe daies bodelye worke all,
The seventh Sabaoth ye shall call,
That daie, for oughte that maie befall,
Hallowed shalbe for ever.
Whoe doth not this, dye shall he,
In howses for ever shall no man se.
Firste frutes to God offer ye,
For hym selfe byde,
Purple and kyse bouth towe,
To hym that shall save you from wo,
And helpe you in your nede.

Tunc descendet de monte, et veniet rex Balacke equitando juxta montem, et dicat Balacke rex.

BALACKE REX.

I, Balacke, kinge of Mobe lande,
All Isarell and I hande in hande;
I am so wroth, I woulde not wonne,
To slea them everye wighte.
For ther God helpes them so stowtlye,
Of other landes to have maisterye,
That yt is boutles witterlye
Againste them for to feighte.
What nacion doth them anoye,
Moyses prayeth anon in hie,
Then have the ever the victorye,
And their enemyes the worste;
Therfore I will wrocken me,
I am bethoughte, as mote I thee,
Balaaham shall come to me,

That people for to curse. flurysh.
No sworde nor knife maye not avayle,
That same people for to assayle;
He that foundes to feighte shall fayle, Caste up.
For sicker it is no boute.
All nacions the doe anoye,
And my folke comen to destroye,
As oxe that draweth beselye
The grasse righte to the roote.
Who so ever Balaaham blesses, i-wysse,
Blessed that man southlye is;
Who so ever he curses fareth amesse,
Such nam over all hath he.
But yet I truste venged to be,
With dente of sworde or polesye;
One these false losscilles, leves ye,
Leve this withouten doute.
For to be wrocken is my desyer,
My harte bornes as hotte as fier
For vervente anger and for ire,
Tell this be broughte aboute.

Surgite, dei patrii, et opitulamini nobis, et in necessitate nos defendite.

Therfore, my god and godes all,
O mightie Marse, on thee I call,
With all the powers infernall,
Rise nowe and helpe at nede.
I am reformed by trewe reporte,
Howe the meditators doth resorte
To wyne my love to their comforte,
Descended of Jacobes seede.
Nowe shewe your powers, you godes almightie,
So that the caytiffes I maie destroye,
Havinge of them full victorye,

And them broughte to mysschaunce.
Sworde. Beate them downe in plaine battill,
Thoes false losselles so cruell,
That all the worlde maie here tell
We take one them vengance.
Out of Egipte flede the be,
And passed through the Rede Sea,
The Egiptians that them pursued trewlye
Were drowned in that same flude:
The have on God mickell of mighte,
Which them doth ayde in wronge or righte,
Who so ever foundeth with them to feighte,
He wynneth littill good.
The have sleayne, this wote I well,
Through helpe of God of Isarell,
Bouth Seon and Ogge, kinges so fell,
And playnlye them destroyed.
Therfore rise up, you godes ichone,
Ye be a hundreth godes for one:
I woulde be wrocken them upon,
For all their pompe and pride:
Therfore, goe fatch in, Batcheler,
That he maye curse this people here,
For suerlye on them in no manner
Maye we not wrocken be.

MILES REGIS BALACKE.

Sir, on your errande will I gone,
That yt shalbe done anon,
And he shall wreke you on your fonne
The people of Isarell.

REX BALACKE.

Yea, loke thou hette hym goulde greate one,
And landes for to leive upon,

To destroye them as he can,
Thes freckes that bene so fell.

Tunc miles regis Balacke ibit ad Balaaham, et dicat:

MILES.

Balaham, my lorde greetes well thee,
And prayeth at hym sone to be,
To curse the people of Judye,
That done hym greate anoye.

BALAHAM.

Abyde a whyle ther, Batchelere,
For I maye have no power,
But if Godes will were,
And that shall I wytte in hye.

Tunc ibit Balam ad consulendum Dominum in oracione.
Balaaham praieth to God on his kneeyes.

SEDENTES DICAT DEUS.

Balaham, I commaunde thee,
Kinge Balackes byddinge for to fleye,
That people that blessed is of me,
Curse thou not by no waie.

BALAHAM.

Lorde, I muste doe thy byddinge,
Though yt be to me unlikinge,
For therby moch woninge
I mighte a hade to daie.

DEUS.

Yet though Balacke be my foe,
Thou shalte have leve theider to goe;
But loke thou doe righte soe,
As I have thee taughte.

BALAHAM.

Lorde, it shalbe donne in highte :
This asse shall beare me righte.
Goe we togeither anon, sir knighte,
For leave nowe have I caughte.

Tunc Balaham et miles equitabunt simul, et dicat :

BALAHAM.

Knighte, by my lawe that I leve one,
Nowe I have leve for to gone,
Cursed the shalbe everye ichone,
And I oughte wyne maye.
Houlde the kinge that he beheighte,
Godes hoste I will sette at lighte,
Warryed the shalbe this nighte,
Or that I wende awaie.

MILES.

Balaham, doe my Lordes will,
And of goulde thou shall have thy fill :
Spare thou not that folke to spille,
And spurne their Godes speche.

BALAHAM.

Frende, I have goodes wounder fell,
Bouth Ruffyn and Raynell
Will worke righte, as I them tell,
Their is no wyle to seeke.

Tunc Balaham ascendet super asinam, et cum milite equitabit, et in obviam veniet angelus Domini cum gladio extracto, et asina vidit ipsum et non Balaham, ad terram prostrata jacebit, et dicat :

BALAHAM.

Goe fourth, burnell, goe fourth, goe !
What the devill ! my asse will not goe !

Served shee me never so,
What sorowe soe ever yt ys:
What the devill, nowe is shee fallne downe!
But nowe rise, and make thee bowne,
And beare me sone out of this towne,
Thou shalte abye, i-wysse.

Tunc percutiet Balaham asinam suam, et nota quod hic oportet aliquis transformari in speciem asine, et quando Balaham percutit dicat asina:

THE ASSE [S]PEAKETH.

Maister, thou doste eville sickerlye,
So good an asse as me to nye:
Nowe haste thou beaten me heare thrye,
That bare thee thus aboute.

BALAHAM.

Burnell, why begileste thou me,
When I have moste nede of thee?

ASINA.

That sighte that before me I see
Maketh me downe to lowte:
Am not I, master, thyn owne asse,
To beare thee wheither thou wylte passe,
And manye wynters readye was?
To smyte me yt is shame.
Thou wotteste well, master, pardye,
Thou hadeste non never like to me,
Ne never yet so serveid I thee:
Nowe am I not to blame.

Tunc videns Balaham angelum evaginatum gladium habentem, adorans ipsum dicat Balaham:

Balaham shall falle sodenlye, and speake to the angell:

BALAHAM.

A! Lorde, to thee I make avowe
I hade no sighte of thee or nowe:
Littill wiste I that it was thou
That feared my asse soe.

ANGELLUS.

Why haste thou beaten thy asse, why?
Nowe am I comen thee to nye,
That changed thy purpose so falslye,
And nowe woulde be my foe.
Yf this asse hade not downe gone,
I woulde have slayne thee heare anon.

BALAHAM.

Lorde, have pittye me uppon,
For synned I have sore.
Lorde, ys yt thy will that I fourth gone?

ANGELLUS.

Yea, but loke thou doe that folke noe woe,
Other wayes then God bade thee doe,
And saide to thee before.

Tunc Balaham et miles equitabunt simul, et in obviam veniet rex Balacke, et dicat rex:

BALACKE REX.

Ah! welckome, Balaham, my frende,
For all my anger thou shalte ende,
Yf that thy wilbe to wende,
And wreake me of my foe.

BALAHAM.

Naughte maye I speake, as I have wyne,
But as God putteth me within,

To forby all the ende of my kyne ;
Therfore, sir, me is woe.

BALACKE REX.

Come fourth, Balaham, come with me,
For on this hill, so mote I thee !
The folke of Isarell shalte thou see,
And curse them, I thee praye.
Goulde and seilver and eke pearle
Thou shalte have greate pleintie,
To curse them, that it sone maie be,
All that thou saide to daie.

Tunc Balacke descendit de equo, et Balaham de asina, et ascendent in montem, et dicat Balacke rex:

BALACKE REX.

Loe, Balaham, thou seeiste heare
Godes people all in feare,
Cittie, castill, and reiver:
Loke nowe, howe likeste thee?
Curse them nowe at my prayer,
As thou wilbe to me full deare,
And in my relme moste of power,
And greateste under me.

Tunc Balaham versus austrum dicat:

BALAHAM.

Howe maye I curse here in this place
That people that God blessed hase?
In them is bouth mighte and grace,
And that is ever well seene:
Wyttnes maye I none beare
Againste God that them can weare,
His people that no man maye deare,
Nor troble with no teene.

I saye thes folke shall have their will,
That no nacion shall them grylle;
The goodnes that the shall fulfill
Nombred maye not be.
Ther God shall them kepe and save,
And other raproffe shall the non have;
But suche death as the shall have,
I praye God sende to me.

BALACKE REX.

What a devill ayles thee, thou popularde!
Thy speache is not worth a farte;
Dotted I hope that thou arte,
For maddlye thou haste wroughte.
I bade thee curse them everye ichone,
And thou blesses them bloode and bone!
To this north syde thou shalte gone,
For heare thy deede is naughte.

Tunc Balacke rex adducet Balaham ad borealem partem montis, et dicat alta voce:

BALAHAM.

O Lorde! that here is ffayer woninge,
Halles, chambers, greate likinge,
Valleyes, woodes, grasse growinge,
Fayer yarde and eke reiver!
I wotte well that God made all this,
His folke to live in joye and blesse,
That curses them cursced he ys,
Whoe blesseth them to God is deare.

BALACKE REX.

Thou preaches as populard as a pie;
The devell of hell thee destroye!
I bade thee curse my enemye,

Therfore thou came to me;
Nowe haste thou blessed them heare thrye,
For the meanes me to anoye.

BALAHAM.

Sir kinge, I toulde thee ere so thrye,
I mighte no other doe.
Nowe one thinge I will tell you all,
Heare after what shal befall:
A steier of Jacobe springe shall,
A man of Isarell,
That shall overcome and have in bande
All kinges and duckes of strange lande,
And all this worlde have in his hande,
As lorde to dighte and deale.
Goe we hense, is no boute
Longer with this man to mote;
For God is bouth crape and roote,
And Lorde of heaven and eairth.
Nowe se I well no man on live,
Againste him no man is able to strive;
Theirfore here is a mote thrie,
I will no longer dwell.

Heare Balaham speaketh to Balacke rex.

BALAHAM.

O Balacke, kinge, abyde a whyle;
I have imagened a marvelous wyle,
Thy enemyes howe thou shalte begile,
My counscell if thou take:
Ther maye no pestelence them dismaye,
Neither battill them afraye,
Pleintifull the shalbe aye
Of goulde, cattill, and corne.
Ther God of them taketh the cure

From passion that he maketh them suer.
Them to preserve in greate pleasuer,
As he before hade sworne.
Ye shall not them destroye for aye,
But for a tyme vexe them you maye;
Marke well what I shall saye,
And worke after my lore.
Sende fourth wemen of thy countrye,
Namelye those that bewtifful be,
Unto thy enemyes let them stande nye,
As stalles to stande [them] before.
When the yonge, that lustye be,
Have perceived their greate bewtye,
The shall desyer their companye,
Love shall them so inflame.
Then when the se the have them suer
In ther love, withouten cure,
The shall denye them their pleasuer,
Excepte the grante the same,
To love their greate solempenitie,
And worshipe their godes of trenetie,
And other thinges comenlye
With other people to use.
So shall the their God displease.
And torne them selves to greate deseaes:
Then maie thou have thy hartes ease,
Their lawe when the reffuce.

BALACKE.

Balaham, thy counscell I shall fulfill,
It shalbe donne righte as thou will.
Come nere, my knighte, that well can skill
My messuage to fulfill.
Goe thou fourth, thou valian[t] knighte,
Loke thou ney stoppe daie ner nighte,

Bringe thoes women to my sighte,
That shall my enemyes destroye.
Spare thou neither riche nor poore,
Wydowe, mayde, nor yet hore;
Yf shee be freshe of collor,
Bringe her with thee, I saie.

MILES.

My lorde, I shall hie faste
To do your will in goodlye haste;
Truste ye well, at the laste,
Your enemyes you shall dismaye.

THE DOCTOR SPEAKETH.

Lordes and ladyes that bene presente,
This messenger that fourth was sente,
As ye have harde of that intente,
Thes wemen for to bringe,
So crafelye he hath wroughte,
The fayereste women he hath out soughte,
And Godes people he hath them broughte,
God knowes, a parlous thinge!
For when the had of them a sighte,
Manye of them againste righte
Gave them selves againste their mighte
These wemen for to please;
And then sone to them the wente,
To have their love was their intente,
Desieringe thoes wemen of their consente,
And so to live in peace.
But thoes wemen them denyed,
Their lawe the saide it shoulde be tryed,
With their mighte not elles abyde,
For feare of greate deceate.
Thes blynde people sware manye an othe,

That nether for leiffe nor for loth,
At anye tyme, the woulde have the wroth,
Nor never againste them pleade.
So by these women so full of iluscion,
Godes people were put to effuscion,
And his displeasuer in concluscion,
His lawe the sete at naughte.
God to Moyses, leve you me,
Byde hym sette up a gallos tree,
The princes of the tribe their hanged to be,
For syn that the hade wroughte.
With that Moyses sore greved
And generallye he them reproved:
Therfore the woulde have hym mischeffed,
But God did hym defende;
For the good people that tendred the lawe,
When the that greate messcheife sawe,
Whollye togeither the cane them drawe
Upon those wreches to make an ende.
And one Phenes, a yonge man devoute,
Captayne he was of that same rowte,
And of these wreches, without all dowte,
xxiiij. thousande he slewe:
And then God was well contente
With Phenes, for his good intente,
As the prophette wryteth veramente,
And here we shall it shewe.

Stetit Phenies, et precavit, et cessavit quassatio, et reputatum est ad justiciam in generacione sua.

Sonne after, by Godes commaundmente,
To the Midianities againe the wente,
And their the slewe veramente
Balaham with five giauntes moe.
Lordinges, moche more matter,

Then in this storye you have harde freey,
But the substance withouten were
Is plaied you before.
And by this prophescie, leve you me,
Three kinges, as you shall plaied see,
Honoured, at his nativitie,
Christe, when he was borne.
Nowe, worthy sires, both greate and small,
Here have we shewed you this storye before,
And yf it be pleasinge to you all,
To morowe nexte you shall have more.
Prainge you all, bouth este and weste,
Wher as ye goe, to speake the beste,
The birth of Christe faire and honeste
Here shall ye se, and fare you well.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me, Georgi Bellin.
Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye. 1592.

VI. THE SALUTATION AND NATIVITY.

The Wryghtes and Sklaters plaie.

Pagina sexta de salutacione et nativitate salvatoris Jesu Christi.

GABRIELL.

Heale be thou, Marye, mother ffree,
Full of grace, God is with thee,
Amonge all wemen blessed thou be,
And the frute of thy bodye.

MARIA.

Ah, Lorde, that sittes highe in see,
That wounderouslye nowe marvailes me,
A symple mayden of my degreey
Be grete this graciouslye.

GABRIELL.

Marye, ney dreed thee naughte this casse;
With greate God founde thou haste
Amonge all wemen especiall grace:
Therfore, Marye, thou mone
Conseave and beare, I tell thee,
A childe, his name Jesus shalbe,
So greate shalbe never non as he,
And called Godes sonne.
And our Lorde God, leve thou me,
Shall geve hym David his fathers see,
In Jacobes howse raigne shall he,
With full mighte ever more.

And he that shalbe borne of thee,
Endlesse liffe in hym shalbe,
That suche renowne and royalltye
Hade never non before.

MARYA.

Howe maye this be? thou arte so brighte,
In synne knewe I no worldlye wighte.

GABRIELL.

The Holye Ghoste shall in thee lighte
From God in magistie,
And shadowe thee seemlye in sighte;
Theirfore that holye, as I have teighte,
That thou shalte beare, through Godes mighte,
His sonne shall called be.
Elizabeth, that barren was,
As thou maie se, conseaveid has
In age a sonne through Godes grace;
The keydell shalbe of blysse.
The seixte month is gone nowe againe
Seith men called her barene,
But nothinge to Godes mighte and mayne
Impossible ys.

MARYA.

Nowe seith that God will yt be so,
And suche a grace hath sente to me,
Blessed ever more be he!
To pleaise hym I am paide.
Loe! Godes cossen meklye here,
And Lorde God, prince of power,
Leve that yt falle in such manere,
This worde that thou haste saide.

Tunc ibit angelus, et Maria salutabit Elizabeth:

Elizabeth, nice God thee see!

ELIZABETH.

Marye, blessed moste thou be,
And the frute that comes of thee
Amonge wemen all.
Wonderlye nowe marvailes me,
That Marye, Godes mother freye,
Greetes me this of symple degreey.
Lorde, howe maie that befalle?
When thou me greeteste, sweete Marye,
The childe stored in my bodye,
For greate joye of thy companye,
And the frute that is in thee.
Blessed be thou ever for-thy,
That leived so well and steadfastlye!
For that was saide to thee, ladye,
Fullfilled and done shalbe.

Maria gaudens incipit canticum Magnificate, et dicat Maria:

MARIA.

Elizabeth, theirfore will I
Thanke the Lorde, kinge of mercye,
With joyfull meirth and melodye,
And lawde to his lekinge.
Magnificate while I have to me,
Anima mei, domine,
To Christe that in my kinde is come,
Devoutlye I will singe.
Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo;
And for my ghoste joyed haste
In God, my heale and all my grace,
For meknes he se in me was
His feare in manye degree.

Therfore blesse me well maie
All generacions for aye.
Moche hase that Lorde donne for me,
That moste is in his magistie,
All princes he passes in postie,
As sheweth wel by this;
Theirfore with full harte and freey,
His name allwaye hallowed be,
And honoured allwaie ever more be he,
And highe in heaven blisse.
Moche hase God done for me to daie,
His name aye hallowed be aye,
As he is bounde to do mercye,
From progenye to progenye,
And all that dreaden hym verelye,
His tallente to fulfill.
He through his mighte gave maisterye,
Dispersces prowde did pitiouslye,
With mighte of his harte hastelye,
At his owine will;
Disposeith mightie out of place,
And meeke also he hansced has,
Hongarye, nedye, wantinge grace,
With good he hath fullfilled.
That riche power he hath forsaken,
To Isarell his sonne he hath betacken,
Wayle to man through hym is wacken,
And mercye has of his owine,
As he spake to our fathers before,
Abraham and his seede for yore;
Joye to the Father evermore,
The Sonne and the Hollye Ghoste,
As was from the beginінge,
And never shall have endinge,

From worlde to worlde aye weildinge,
Amen! God of mighte moste.

ELIZABETH.

Marye, I rede nowe that we gone
To Josephe thy husbande anon,
Leste he to messe thee make mone,
For nowe that is moste neede.

MARIA.

Elizabeth, nice, to doe so good ys,
Leste he suppose on me amysse;
But the good Lorde that hath ordeyned this,
Will wyttnes of my deede.

ELIZABETH.

Josephe, God thee save and see!
Thy wiffe I have broughte to thee.

JOSEPHE.

Alas! alas! and woes me!
Who hase made her with childe?
Well I wiste an oulde man and a maye
Mighte not accorde by noe waye;
Nor manye wynters mighte I not plaie,
Ner worcke no worckes wilde.
Three monthes shee hase bene from me,
Nowe hase shee gotten here, as I see,
A greate bellye like to thee,
Since shee wente awaie;
And myne it is not, be thou boulde,
For I am bouth oulde and coulde;
These thirtie wynters, thoughe I woulde,
I mighte not plea no leaie.

Alas! where mighte I lenge or lende?
For loth is me my wife to shende,
Therfore from her will I wende
Into some other place.
For to discreve her will I naughte,
Fowlye though shee have wroughte,
To leave her prevelye is my thoughte,
That no man knowe this case:
God lette never an oulde man
Take hym a yonge woman,
Nay sette his harte her uppon,
Leste he begilede be.
For accorde their maye be non,
Nor the maye never be at one;
And that is seene in manye a one,
As well as one me.
Therfore when I have slepte a while,
My wife that can me thus begyle,
For I will goe from her, for her to file
Me is loth in good faye.
This case makes me so heavye,
That nedes slepe nowe muste I:—
Lorde, on her thou have mercie,
For her misdeede to daie.

ANGELLUS.

Josephe, lette be thy feible thoughte,
Take Marye, thy wife, and dreed the naughte,
For wickedlye shee hath not wroughte,
But this is Godes will.
The childe that shee shall beare, i-wysse,
Of the Holye Ghoste begotten is,
To save mankinde that did amisse,
And prophescie to fullfill.

JOSEPHE.

A ! nowe I wotte, Lorde, yt is soe,
I will no man be her foe,
But while I maie on earth goe
With her I wilbe;
Nowe Christe is in our kinde lighte,
As the prophescye before heighte.
Lorde God, moste of mighte,
Withe wayle I worshippe thee.

NUNTIUS.

Make rombe, lordinges, and geve us waie,
And lette Octavian come and plaie,
And Syble the Sage, that well fayer maye
To tell you of prophescye:
That Lorde that died on Good Frydaie,
He save you all bouth nighte and daye.
Fare well, lordinges, I goe my waye,
I maye noe longer abyde.

OCTAVYAN.

I proveid prince, moste of postie,
Under heaven higheste am I,
Fayereste food to feighte in fere,
Noe frecke my fface maye fleye.
All this worlde withouten were,
Kinge, prince, baren, bachelere,
I maye destroye in greate dangere,
Through vertue of my degreey.
My name Octavyan called ys,
All me aboute full in my blysse,
For whollye all this worlde, i-wysse,
Is readye at my owine wille.
Noe man one live dare doe amisse
Againste me, I tell you this:

Maye no man saye that oughte is his,
But my leave be theirtill.
For I halffe multiplied more
The cittye of Rome, seith I was bore,
Then ever did anye me before,
Seith I hade this kingdom ;
For what with strockes and strengthe sore,
Leadinge lordshippes lovelye lore,
All this worlde nowe hase bene yore
Tributarye unto Rome.

Segurrs tous se asmeles
Jeo posse fayre lerment et leez
A mes probes estates et mete in langore
Tous se prest me fortes
De fayere intentes movelentes
Car Jesu soyavorayn bensages
Et demaunde emperower
Jeo si persone mile seable Jeosu tent fayer
Et leabele entransorce me creaca
Meas detole plerunte destrette et sage
Saen comecch amie ondem et ou pusell
Declaan sanke et mater frayle un
Tellnest pace um.

Kinge, coysell, clarke, or kinge,
Soundens solitaryes in sighte ;
Princes, prese here nowe dighte,
And presente in this place :
Peace, or heare my truth i-plighte,
I am the manlieste man of mighte,
Takes mynde of my mase.
All lordes in lande be at my likinge ;
Castill, conquerowre, and kinge,
Bayne be to my byddinge,
It will non other be.

Righte I thinke, so moste it be,
For all the worlde dose my willinge,
And bayne when I byde bringe
Homage and feoalitie.
Seithen I was lorde, withouten lesse,
With my witte I can more increasse
The empier hier then ever it was,
As all this worlde it wiste.
Since I was soveraigne warre cleane can cease,
And through this worlde nowe is peace,
For so dreade a ducke sate never one dese
In Rome, that you maie truste;
Therfore as lorde nowe likes me,
To prove my mighte and my postie,
For I will sende aboute and see
Howe manye heades I have.
All the worlde shall wrytten be,
Greate and small in eiche degreey,
That dwell in shier or in cittie,
Kinge, clarke, knighte, and knave.
Eich man on pennye shall paie;
Therfore, my bedell, doe as I saye.
In medeste the worlde by anye waie,
This gammon shal begyne;
The folke of Jewes in good faye
In medeste bene, that is no naye,
Therfore theider daye by daie,
And traville or thou blyne.
Warne hym that their is presedente,
That this is fullye myne intente,
That eich man appeare presente
His pennye for to paye.
And by that penye, as well apente,
Knowledge to be obediente,
To come by geiste of such a rente,
From that tyme after ever.

When this is done this in Judye,
That in the medeste of the worlde shalbe,
To eiche lande, shier, and cittie,
To Rome make them so thralle.
Warne them, boye, I comaunde thee,
The doe the same, saye this from me,
So all this worlde shall witte that we
Bene soveraigne of them all.
Have done, boye, arte thou not bowne?

PRECO.

All readye, my lorde, by Mahounde,
No tayles tuppe in all this towne
Shall goe further without fayle.

OCTAVIAN.

Boye, their be ladyes manye a one,
Amonge them all chouse thee one
Take the faiereste, or elles non,
And freelye I geve her thee.

PRIMUS SENATOR.

From my lorde Octavyan we be sente,
From all Rome with good intente,
Thy men their have iche on i-mente
As God to honour thee.
And to that poynte we be sente,
Poore and riche in parlimente,
For so loved a lorde veramente
Was never in this cittie.

SECUNDUS SENATOR.

Yea, seicker sir, their will is this,
To honoure thee as God with blesse;
For thou did never to them amisse,

In worde, thoughte, ner deede.
Peace hath bene longe, and yet is,
Noe man in thy tyme loste oughte of his;
Therfore their will is so, i-wisse,
To quitte you this your meede.

OCTAVIAN.

Welckome, my frendes, in good faye!
For you be welckome to my paie;
I thanke you all that ever I maie
The homage ye doe to me;
But follye it were, by manye a waye,
Suche soveraigntye for to assaie,
Seinge I muste dye I wote not what daie
To desyer suche dignitie.
For all the fleshe, bloode, and bone,
Man I am borne of a woman,
And siccker other matter non
Sheweth not righte in me:
Nether of iron, tree, nor stone,
Am I not wroughte, ye wotte eichone,
And of my liffe moste parte is gone.
Age sheweth hym soe, I see;
And godheade askes in all thinge
Tyme that hath no begininge,
Ne never shall have endinge,
And non of thes have I.
Wherfore by vereye proffe shewinge,
Though I be higheste worldlye kinge,
Of godhead have I noe knowinge;
It were unkinde.
But yeate inquier of this wilbe,
At her that hath grace for to se
Thinges that afterwarde shalbe,
By ghoste of prophescye.

And after her lawe, by my bewtie,
Disscussinge this difficallitie,
Worcke and take no more on me,
Then I am well worthye.
Sibell the Sage, tell me this thinge,
For thou witte haste as no man livinge,
Shall ever be anye eairthlye kinge
To passe me of degreey?

SYBBELL.

Yea, sir, I tell you without leasinge,
A barne shalbe borne blesse to bringe,
The which that never hade begininge,
Ner never shall endinge have.

OCTAVIAN.

Sybbell, I praye thee especiallye,
By signe thou woulde me certiffye,
What tyme that lorde so royallye
To raigne he shal begyne.

SYBBELL.

Yea, I shall tell you witterlye,
His signes when I see verelye;
For when he comes through his mercye,
On mankinde he will mynne:
Well I wotte and south, i-wysse,
That God will bringe mankinde to blesse,
And sende from heaven, leve well this
His sonne our savyour.
Jesu Christe nothinge ameisse
Called he shalbe and ys,
To overcome the devill and his countise,
And be our conquerower.
But what tyme, sire, in good faye

That he will come, can I not saye,
Therfore in this place will I praie
To greateste God of mighte:
And yf I see oughte in your paie,
Ghostlye by anye waye
Warne you I shall this daie,
And shewe yt in your sighte.

Tunc orat Sibbella, et dicat preco alta voce.

PRECO.

Peace, I byde, kinge and knighte,
Men and wemen, and iche wighte,
Tell I have toulde that I have tighte,
Stande stiffe bouth still and stronge;
My lorde Octavian, moche of mighte,
Commaundes you shoulde be readye dighte,
Tribute he will have in heighte
Of all this worlde aboute.
He will have wrytten eiche cuntreye,
Castill, shier, and eke cittie,
Men and wemen, leeve you me,
And all that be theirin.
A penye of eich man have will he,
The valewe of tenne pence it shalbe,
To knowledge that he hath soveraigntye
Fullye of all mankinde.

JOSEPH.

A! Lorde, what doth this man nowe heare!
Poore mens weale is ever in were:
I wotte, by this boisters beare,
That tribute I muste paye;
And for greate age and no power
I wane no good this seven yeaire,
Nowe comes the kinges messingere,

To gette all that he maye.
With this axe that I beare,
This perscer and this nagere,
A hamer all in feare,
I have wonnan my meate.
Castill, tower, ne manere,
Had I never in my power;
But, as a symple carpentere,
With thes what I mighte gette.
Yf I have store nowe anye thinge,
That muste I paye unto the kinge,
But yet I have a likinge,
The angell to me toulde;
He that man out of balle bringe,
My wife hade in her kepinge,
That seemes all good to my likinge,
And makes me more boulde.
A! leiffe sir, tell me, I thee praye,
Shall poore as well as riche paye?
By my faye! sire, I hope naye,
That were a woundrous wronge.

PRECO.

Good man, I warne thee, in good faye,
To Bethlem to take the waye,
Leste thou in danger fall to daye,
Yf thou be to longe.

JOSEPHE.

Nowe, seith it may no other be,
Marie, sister, nowe hye we,
An oxe I will take with me
That their shalbe soulde;
The seilver of hym, so mote I thee!
Shall fynde us in that cittye,

And paye tribute for thee and me,
For theirto we be houlde.

MARIA.

A ! Lorde, what maye this signifie ?
Some men I see glade and merye,
And some all sickinge and sorye :
Wherfore so ever yt be,
Seith Godes sonne came man to for-bye,
Is comen through his greate mercye,
Me thinke that man should kindlye
Be glade that sighte to see.

ANGELLUS.

Marye, Godes mother deare,
The tockeninge I shall thee lere,
The comon people, as thou seiste heare,
Are glade, as the well maye,
That the shall see of Abrahames seede
Christe come to helpe them in ther neede,
Wherfore the joye withouten dreed
For to abyde this daie.
The mourninge men, take this in mynde,
Are Jewes that shalbe put behynde,
For the passeth out of kinde,
Through Christe at his cominge ;
For the shall have no grace to knowe
That God for man shall lighte so loe ;
For shame on them that sone shall shooe,
Theirfore the be mourninge.

JOSEPHE.

Marie, sister, south to saye,
Harber I hope gette we non maie,
For greate lordes of stowte araye

Do occupye this plase;
Wherfore we muste, in good faye,
Lie in this stable tell it be daie;
To make men meeke, leeve I maie,
Shewe hym heare will he.

MARIA.

Helpe me downe, my leffe fere,
For I hope my tyme be nere,
Christe in this stable that is here
I hope borne wilbe.

Tunc Josephe accipiet Mariam in brachia sua.

JOSEPHE.

Come to me, my sweete deare,
The treasure of heaven without were;
Welckome in full meke manere
Hym hope I for to see.

Tunc statuet Mariam inter bovem et asinam.

Marie, sister, I will assaie
To gette towe mydwyffes, yf I maie;
For though in thee be God vereye
A-comen againste kinde;
For usage here of this cittie,
As manners sake as thinkes me,
Towe I will feche anon to thee,
Yf I maie anye fynde.

JOSEPHE [AD] OBSTETRICES.

Wemen, God ye save and see!
Is it your will to goe with me?
My wife is comen into this cittie
With childe, and tyme is nye;
Helpe her nowe, for charittye!
And be with her tell daie be,

And youer travayle, so mote I thee!
I shall paie you righte heare.

TEBELL.

All readye, good man, in good faye,
We will doe all that ever we maie;
For towe suche myddwifes, I dare saie,
Are not in this cittie.

SALOME.

Come, good man, leade us the waie:
With Godes helpe, or it be daye,
That we can good thy wife shall saie,
And that thou shalte well see.

JOSEPHE.

Loe! Marye, sweete harte, broughte I have here
Towe mydwifes, for the manere,
To be with thee, my darlinge deare,
Tell that it be daye.

MARYA.

Sir, the be welckome withouten were;
But God will worcke of his power
Full sone for me, my leiffe fere,
As beste is nowe and ever.

Tunc paululum acquiescunt,

A! Josephe, tydinges arighte,
I have a sonne, a sweete wighte,
Lorde, thanked be thou, moche of mighte!
For proved is thy postie.
Paine non I felte this nighte,
But righte so as he in me lighte,
Comen he is here in my sighte,
Godes sonne, as thou maie see.

Tunc stella apparebit.

JOSEPHE.

Lorde, welckome, sweete Jesu,
Thy name thou hadeste, or I thee knewe;
Nowe leeve I the angelles wordes trewe
That thou arte a cleane maie;
For thou arte comen mans blesse to brewe,
To all that thy lawe will shewe,
Nowe mans joye begineth to newe,
And joye to passe awaie.

MARIA.

Lorde, blessed muste thou be,
That symple borne arte, as I see!
To prive the devell of his postie,
Comen thou arte to daie;
Fyne clothes is non for thee;
Therfore thy sweete bodye freey
In this crache shall lye with lee,
And be lapped aboute with haye.

TEBELL.

A! deare Lorde, heaven kinge,
That this is a marvelous thinge,
Withouten teene or travelinge,
A fayer sonne shee hase one;
I dare well saye for south, i-wisse,
That cleane mayden this woman is,
For shee hathe borne a childe with blesse,
So wiste I never non.

SALOME.

Be stille, Tebell, I thee praie!
For that is false, in good faye.
Was never woman cleane maye,

And childe withouten man?
But never the latter I will assaye,
Wheither shee be cleane maie,
And knowe it yf I can.

Tunc Salome tentabit tangere Mariam scpu secreto, et statim arescent manus ejus, et clamando dicat.

Alas! alas! alas! alas!
Me is betyde a sorye case;
My handes be dryed up in this place,
That feelinge non have I.
Vengance on me nowe is lighte,
For I woulde temp[t]e Godes mighte;
Alas! that I cam here to nighte,
To suffer suche anoye.

Tunc apparet stella, et veniet angelus dicens ut sequitur.

ANGELLUS.

Wemen, beseeke this childe of grace,
That he forgeve thee thy treaspas,
And ever thou goe out of this place,
Holpen thou shalbe:
This mirackle nowe, that thou seeiste here,
Is of Godes owine power,
To bringe mankinde out of dangere,
And mende them, leeve thou me.

SALOME.

A! sweete childe, I aske mercye,
For thy mothers love, Marye,
Though I have wroughte wrechedlye,
Sweete childe, forgeve it me.—
A! blessed be God! all wholle am I!
Nowe leve I well and seckerlye,

That God is comen man to for-bye,
And, Lorde, thou arte he.

EXPOSITOR.

Lo, lordinges all, of this mirackelle here
Free Barthelemewe, in good manere,
Beareth wittnes withouten were,
As plaied is you beforne;
Another mirackle, yf I maie,
I shall rehearse, or I goe awaie,
That befell that same daie
That Jesus Christe was borne.
We reade in cronackles expresse
Some tyme in Rome a temple was,
Made of suche greate riches
That wounder was witterlie;
For all thinges in it, leve you me,
Was silver, goulde, and riche pearle;
The thirde parte the worlde, as reade we,
That temple was worthye.
Of eiche provinges that boke mynde mase,
Their godes image their sette was,
And eicheone aboute his necke hase
A seilver belle hanginge;
And one his breste written also
The landes naimes and goodes bouth too,
And sette also in medeste of thoe,
God of Rome righte as a kinge.
Aboute the howse also meaninge theire
A man on horse stoode men to steare,
And in his hande he bare a speare,
All pewer dispitiouslye:
That horse and man was made of brasse,
Torninge aboute that image was,
Save certene preistes their mighte non passe

For devilles fantesye.
But when that anye lande withe battill
Was readye Rome for to assaile,
The godes I meane withouten fayle
Of that lande range his belle,
And torned his face dispitiouslye
To god of Rome, as rede I,
In tockeninge that their wente readye
To feightinge freshe and fell.
The image also above standinge,
When the bell beneath beganne to ringe,
Torninge hym all sharplie shewinge
Towarde that lande his speare:
And when the see this tockeninge,
Rome ordeyned without taryeinge
And oste to kepe their torninge
Longe or the came their.
And in this maner southlye,
By arte of negremonscye,
All the worlde witterlye
To Rome were made lowte.
And in that temple their dowtles
Was called theirfore the Temple of Peace,
Through his sleate battill can cease,
Throughout the worlde aboute.
But he so cuninglye this worcke caste,
Asked the devill, or he paste,
Howe that temple it shoulde laste
Tha[t] he their can builde.
The devill answered suttellye,
And saide it shoulde laste sickerlye,
Untell a mayden womanlye
Hade conseaved a childe.
The harde and beleeved theirfore
Yt shoulde indewer for evermore,

But that tyme that Christe was bore
Yt fell downe sone in hie.
Of which howse is seene this daie,
Somewhat standinge, in good faye,
But no man dare goe that waie
For feindes fantasye.
That daie was seene veramente
Three sonnes in the firmamente,
And wonderlye togeither wente,
And torned into one.
The oxe, the asse, their the be lente,
Honoured Christe in their intente,
And more mirackles, as we have mente
To playe righte here anon.

Tunc ostendent stellam, et veniet Sibella ad imperatorem.

SIBBILLA.

Sir emperower, God thee save and see!
I tell you trulye that borne is he
That passes thee of postie;
Loke upon highe after me,
That barron thou seiste greate shalbe
To passe all kinges and eke thee,
That is borne or ever shalbe.

OCTAVIAN.

O Sibelle, this is a wounderous sighte!
For yender I see a mayden brighte,
A yonge childe in her armes clighte;
A brighte crosse in his heade.
Honoure I will that sweete wighte
With incense with all my mighte,
For that reverence is moste righte,
Yf that it be thy reade.
Incence bringe I commaunde in hie,

To honoure this childe, kinge of mercye.
Shoulde I be God? ney, ney, witterlie,
Greate wronge I wiste it were.
For this childe is more worthye
Then suche a thousande as am I;
Theirfore to God moste mightie
Incense I offer heare.

Tunc angellus cantabit, hec este ara Dei, cela fiant notam, secundum arbitrium agentis.

A! Sybell, heares not thou this songe?
My members all it goeth amonge,
Joye and blesse maketh my harte stronge,
To heare this melodye;
Trulye it maye non other be
But this childe is prince of postie,
And I his subjecte, as I see:
He is moste worthy.

SYBELL.

Yea, sir, thou shalte leeve well this,
Somewhere in earth borne he is,
And that he cometh for mans blisse
His tocken this can shewe.
Reverence hym I rede, i-wisse,
For other God ther non is:
He that hopeth otherwise dothe amisse,
But hym for Christe to knowe.

OCTAVIAN.

Sires, senatores, goes whom anon,
And warne my men everye icheone,
That suche worshippe I muste forgone
As the woulde doe to me;
But this childe worshippe iche man,

With full harte all that you can,
For he is worthye to leeve upon,
And that I nowe well see.
And, Lorde, whatever this maie be,
This is a wounderous sighte to see,
For in the starre, as thinketh me,
I see a full faier maye.

PRIMUS SENATOR.

Sir, shall this childe passe ye
Of worthynes and dignitie?
Suche a lorde, by my lewtie,
I wende never hade bene non.

EXPOSITOR.

Lordinges, that this is vereye,
By vereye signe knowe ye maie,
For in Rome, in good faye,
Ther as thes thinges was seene,
Was builde a chourshe in noble araye,
In worshipe of Marye that sweete maye,
That yet lasteth unto this daie,
As men knowe that their hath bene.
And for to have full memorye
Of the angelles melodye,
And of this sighte seckerlye,
The emperower their knewe,
The churche is called Saynte Marie,
The sirname in a Racali,
That men knowe well theirby
Tha[t] this was fullye trewe.
Another mirackle I fynde also,
A christes birth fell thoe,
When Salome attempted to knowe
Wheither shee was a maye,

Her hande rotted, as you have seene;
Wherby ye maye take good teene,
That unbeleffe is a fowle syne
As you have seene in this place.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me Georgi Bellin. 1592.
Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye.

VII. THE PLAY OF THE SHEPHERDS.

The Paynters and the Glasiors Playe.

Incipit pagina septima de pastoribus.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

One wouldes I have walked full wylde,
Under bushes my bower to builde,
From stiffe stormes my sheepe to sheilde,
My seemlye weithers to save;
From comelye Conwaye unto Clyde,
Under tyldes them to hyde,
A better sheaparde on no syde
No yeairthlye man maye have.
For with walkinge wearye I have me thoughte,
Besyde thee suche my shee[pe] I soughte,
My talefull tuppes are in my thoughte
Them to save and heale.
From the shrewde scabe it soughte,
Or the rotte, yf yt were wroughte,
Yf the caughe had them caughte,
Of yt I coulde them heale.
Loe, here be my erbes safe and sounde,
Wislye wrought for everye wounde,
The woulde a wholl man bringe to grounde
Within a littill while;
Of henbane and horehounde,
Bybbey raydishe and egremounde,
Which be my erbes saffe and sounde,

Medled on a rowe.
Here be more erbes, I tell it you,
I shall recken them on a rooe,
Fynter fanter, and ffetter foe,
And also penye wrytte.
This is all that I knowe,
For be it weither or be it yoo,
I shall them heale on a rooe,
Cleane from their hurte.
Heare is tarre in a potte,
To heale from the rotte;
Well I can and well I wotte
The caughe from them take.
But no fellowshippe heare have I,
Save my selfe alone in good faye;
Therfore after one faste will I crye,
But firste will I drinke, yf I maie.

Hic potet Primus Pastor.

Howe, Harvye, howe!
Drive thy sheepe to the lowe;
Thou maye not heare excepte I blowe,
As ever have I heale.

Hic flabit Primus Pastor.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

It is noe shame for to shewe
Howe I was sette to sowe,
With the feither of a croe,
A clowte upon my heele. sitte downe.
Felowe, nowe we be well mete,
And thoughe me thinkes nedes,
Hade we Tudde heare by us sette,
Their mighte we sitte and feede us.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Yea, to feede us frendlye in faye,
Howe mighte we have our service aye,
Crye thou muste lowde, by this daie,
Tudde is deafe and [maye] not well heare us.

Secundus Pastor vocat submissa voce.

Howe, Tudde, come for thy father kyn.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Naye, faye, thy voyce is wounderous dyme;
Why, knowes thou not hym?
Fye, man, for shame!
Calle hym Tudde Tybbes sonne,
And then will the shrewe come,
For, in good faith, it is his wonne
To love well his dames name.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Howe, Tudde, Tybbes sonne!

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Sir, in faith nowe I come,
For yette have I not all done
That I have to doe;
To seithe salve for our sheepe;
And leste my wife shoulde it weete,
With grete gravill and greete
I skoure an oulde pane.
Hemlocke and hereife take kepe,
With tarre boyste muste be tamde,
Penye gresse and butter for fatte sheepe,
For this saulfe am I not ashamed;
Ashamed am I not to shewe
No poynte that longes to my crafte,

No better that I well knowe
In lande is no where lefte.
For to good men this is not unknowne,
To husbandes that be heare aboutes,
That iche man muste to his wife bowne,
And commonlye for feare of a cloute.
This for clowtes nowe care I,
All is for feare of our dame Kenye,
Nowe will I caste my ware here by,
And hye faste that I were at Hancken.
Hancken, houlde up thy hande, and have me,
That I were on heighte their by thee.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Gladlye, sir, yf thou woulde be by me,
For lothe me is to denye thee.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Nowe seinge God hath gaithred us togeither,
With good harte I thanke hym of his grace.
Wellckome be thou well fayer weither,
Tudde, will we shape us to some solace.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Solace woulde beste be seene
That we shape us to our suppere;
For meate and drinke well, I wene,
To eiche deede is moste deare.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Laye fourth iche man aleiche
What he hath lefte of his livereye;
And I will put fourth my piche,
With my parte, firste of us all three.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

And suche store as my wife hade,
In your sighte sone shall you see,
At our begininge us for to glade.
For in good meate their is moche glee.
Heare is bread this daie was baken;
Onyans, garlicke, and leickes,
Butter that boughte was in Blackon,
And greene cheese that will greese your cheekes.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

And heare ale of Halton I have,
And whotte meate I hade to my hier;
A puddinge maye no man deprave,
And a jannacke of Lancaster shire.
Loe! heares a sheepes heade sawsed in ale,
And a grayne to laye on the greene,
And sower mylke my wife hade ordened,
A noble supper as well is seene.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Nowe will I caste of my cloke,
And put out parte of my liverye,
And put out that I have in my pocke,
And a gygges foote from puddinge purye.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Abyde, fellowes, and you shall see here
This hotte meate serveid here,
Gammons and other good meate in feare,
A puddinge with a pricke in the ende.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

My secchell to shake oute
To sheapardes am I not ashamed;

And this tonge pared rounde aboute,
With my tonge it shalbe atamed.

Tunc comedent, et dicat Primus Pastor:

Howseinge enoffe have we heare,
While that we have heaven over our heades:
Nowe to weete our mouthes tyme were,
This flagette will I tame, yf thou reade us.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

And of this bottill nowe will I bibbe,
For heare is but of the beste;
Suche liccore makes me to live,
This game maye nowher be lefte.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Fellowes, nowe our bellye be full,
Thinke we on hym that kepes our flockes.
Blowe thy horne and [call] after Trowle,
And byde hym some of our bittlockes.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Well sayde, Hancken, by my south,
For that shrewe I suppose seekes us.
My horne to blowe I will not lette,
Tell that ladde have some of our leckes.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Leekes to his livereye is likinge,
Suche a lade nowher in lande is.
Blowe a mote for that mittinge,
Whyle that horne nowe in thy hande is.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

With this horne I shall make a howe
That he and all heaven shall heare;

Yender ladde, that sittes on a lowe,
The lowde of this horne shall heare.

Tunc cantabit, et dicat Trowle:

Good Lorde, loke one me!
And my flocke heare as the feed have;
On this woulde walke we woe,
Are no man heare that maye,
All is playne perdye;
Therfore, sheepe, we mone goe,
No better maye be
Of beastes that bloode and bone have.
Wotte I not daie nor nighte,
Necessaryes that to me ne done,
Tarre boyste and tarre boyle
Ye shall see heare,
Nettell, hemlocke, and butter abydinge,
And my good dogge Dottinoule,
That is nothinge choyse of his chydinge.
Yf any man come me bye,
And woulde witte which waie were beste,
My legge I leifte up as I lye,
And wishe hym the waie este or weste.
And I rose when I laye,
I woulde thinke that travill loste.
For kinge nor ducke by this daie
Rise I will not, but take my reste.
Nowe here sitte downe I will,
Harmles, as I hastelye hope;
No man heare shall drinke,
Save my selfe, the devill of the sope.
All this bottill I sette at littill,
Naye, ye lades, kepe I not to lye thee;
For ye have manye a fowle fitte,
Thou fowle fylth, though thou flitte, I defye thee.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Trowle, take teene to my talkinge,
For thy teeith heare is good touginge,
While thy weithers bene walkinge,
And on this loyne thou maie have good luginge.

TROWLE.

Fye on your loynes and on youer livereye!
Youer lyverastes, livers and lounges!
You sause, your saustes, your saverye,
Your sittinge without anye songes.
On this hill I houlde me heare,
No hape to your hotte meate have I;
But sitte with my fellowes in freye,
And your sheepe full securlye save I.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

For thou saves our sheepe,
Good knave, take kepe;
Seith thou maye not slepe,
Come eate of this sauce.

TROWLE.

Naye, the durte is so depe
Stopped theirin for to stepe,
And the grobbes theiron doe crepe
At whom at thy howse.
Therfore meate, yf I maie,
Of your dightinge to daie
Will I naughte, by no waie,
Tell I have my wages.
I wende to have been gaye:
Se so ragged is myne araye,
Aye pynckes is your paye
To everye poore page.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Trowle, boye, for Godes fee!
Come eate a morscill with me,
And then wrastill will we
Here on this greene.

TROWLE.

That shall I never fleye,
Though yt be with all three,
To laye my livereye,
That wages will I houlde.

Tunc ibit ad magistros suos, et dicat Trowle:

Nowe comes Trowle the trewe,
A turne to take have I tighte
With my maistores, or I rewe,
Put hym fourth that moste is of mighte.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Trowle, better never thou knewe,
Eate of this meate for a knighte.

TROWLE.

Naye, spare I will, thoughe I spewe,
All upon thy heade shall lighte.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Howe shoulde we suffer all this shame,
Of a shrewe this to be shente?

TERCIUS PASTOR.

This ladde luste to be lamde,
And lose a lyme or he wente.

TROWLE.

Have done, begyne we this game,
But ware leste your golions glette.
That were littill dole to our dame,
Though in meideste Dde the were drente.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

False lade, fye on thy face,
On this grounde thou shalte have a falle.
Hente one and houlde that thou haste,
Yf thou hape have all goe to all.

TROWLE.

And these sires heare to solace,
Hancken, sheaparde, shame thee I shall;
Worth thou arte worse then thou was,
Ware leste thou walte here by the walle.

Tunc projiciat primum pastorem, et dicat Secundus Pastor:

Boye, leste I breake thy bones,
Kneele downe and aske me a bone,
Leste I destroye thee heare on thes stones:
Cease, leaste I shame thee to sone.

TROWLE.

Gloe thee to greynes and groundes,
Good were thee thy oulde ragges to save sounde;
Littill doute of suche drownes,
Leither tycke, for thy deedes are done.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Out, alas! he lyes on his loynes,
But let me goe nowe to that lade!
Sheapardes he shames and shyndes,
For laste nowe am I out shade.

TROWLE.

Bouth your backes heare to me bendes,
For all your boste I houlde you full bade;
Houlde your ersces and your hynder loynes,
Then hope I to have as I to-fore hade,
The better in the bore, as I hade before,
Of this boverte.
Yea, hope I more, kepe well thy store,
For feare of a farte.

Tunc projiciat tertium pastorem, et dicat Trowle:

Lye their, leither in the lacke,
My livereye nowe will [I] lache;
This curye, this cloute, and this cake,
For ye be caste nowe will I kache.
To the devill I all you betake,
And traytors ataynte of your tache,
One this woulde with this will I walke,
All the worlde wounder on the wache.

Et sic recedat Trowle, et dicat Primus Pastor:

Fellowes, this a fowle case is,
That we bene this caste out of a knave;
All againste our willes he hase his,
But I muste nedes houlde the harme that I have.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

That I have nedes muste I houlde,
Of thes unhappye harmes ofte here I:
Therfore will I wayte on this woulde
Upon the wedder, for I am wearye.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Thoughe we be weayrie, no wounder,
What betwene wrastlinge and walkinge!

Ofte we maye be in thoughte, we be nowe under,
God amende yt with his makinge!

Tunc sedebunt, et stella apparebit, et dicant:

PRIMUS PASTOR.

What is all this lighte here,
That blackes so brighte heare,
On my blacke beyrde?
For to see this lighte heare,
A man maye be afrighte heare,
For I am freayde.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Freayde, for a fraye nowe,
Maye we be all nowe,
A! yet it is nighte,
Yet seemes yt daie nowe,
Se I suche a sighte!

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Suche a sighte seeminge,
And a lighte leminge,
Lettes me to loke;
All to my deeminge,
From a starre streminge
Hit to me strocke.

TROWLE.

That starre, yf yt stande,
To see will I founde,
Though mighte lighte fayle:
While I maye live in londe,
Why shoulde I founde,
Yf it will avayle?

Tunc respiciens firmamentum, et dicat Trowle:

A ! God mighte is,
In yender starre lighte is,
Of the sonne this sighte is,
As yt nowe sheines.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

It seemes as I nowe see
A brighte starre to be,
Their to abyde.
From it we maye not fleye,
But aye glye on the glee,
Tell yt downe glyde.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Fellowes, will we
Knele downe on our knye,
After comfortes,
To the trewe Trenitie,
For to leade us to see
Our elderes Lorde.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Our Lorde will us lere
In our prayer,
Wherto it will apente,
And why on highte here
The eayre is so cleare,
Nowe shall we be kente.

TROWLE.

Lorde, of this lighte
Guyde us some sighte,
Why that it is sente.
Before this nighte,

Was I never so afrighte
Of the fermamente.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Wyste I, by my faye!
Nowe is yt nighe daie,
So was it never;
Therfore I praye
The south us to saie,
Or that we desevere.

Tunc cantet angelus, Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bone voluntatis.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Fellowes in feare,
Maye you not heare
This muttinge on heighte?

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

A glore and in glere,
Yet no man was nere
Within our sighte.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Naye, it was a glorye!
Nowe am I sorye,
But more songe.

TROWLE.

Of this strange storye
Such mirth more I
Woulde have amonge.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

As I them demed,

Scellsis it seemed
That he sange.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

While the lighte lemed,
Awreckinge me wened,
I wiste never woo.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

What songe was this, saye ye,
That the sange to us all three?
Expounded shall yt be,
Or we hense passe;
For I am eldeste of degree,
And also beste, as seemes me:
Hit was glore glare with a glee,
Hit was nether more nor lesse.

TROWLE.

Nay, it was glori, glory, glorious!
Me thoughte that note ronne over the howse:
A semlye man he was and curyous,
But sone awaie he was.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Naye, it was glory, glory, with a glo!
And moche of cellsis was therto:
As ever have I reste or roo,
Moche he spake of glasse.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Naye, yt was nether glasse nor glye;
Therfore, fellowe, nowe stande by.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

By my faith! he was some spie,

Our sheepe for to steale ;
Or elles he was a man of our crafte,
For semlye he was and wounder dafte.

TROWLE.

Naye, he came by nighte, all thinge lefte,
Our tuppes with tarre to tell.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Nay, on a glore, on a glory, on a glye !
Gurde Gabrill, when he so gloryed ;
When he sange I mighte not be sorye,
Througe my breste bone bletinge he borned.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Nay, be God ! it was a gloria,
Sayde Gabrill when he beganne so,
He hade a moche better voyce then I have,
As in heaven all other have so.

TERÇIUS PASTOR.

Will ye heare howe he sange selsis ?
For on that sadlye he sete hym,
Neither singes Sir, nor so well Sis,
Ney paxe merye Maude when she so met hym.

TROWLE.

One tyme he touched on terre,
And therto I toke good intente ;
All heaven mighte not a gone harre,
That noote on heighte when he up hente.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

And after of paxe or of peace,
Up as pye he piped,

Suche a loden that is no lesse,
Never in my life me so liked.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Upon omnibus he mutted,
That moch marville to me was,
And ever I quocke when the so shouted,
I durst not heade wher that it was.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Yet he sange more then all this;
Froo my mynde it shall not starte,
For he sange *Bene voluntatis*,
That is a crape that passeth all other.

TROWLE.

Yet [and] yet, he sange more to,
Froo my harte it shall not starte;
He sange also of *a Deo*,
Me thoughte healed my harte.
And that worde *Terre* he tamed,
Therto I toke good intente,
And paxe also maye not be blamed,
For that to this songe I assente.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Nowe praye we to hym with good intente,
And singe I will and me imbrace,
That he will let us to be kente,
And to sende us of his grace.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Nowe seith I have all my will,
For never in this worlde so well hase,

Singe we nowe I redde us shrille,
A merye songe us to solace.

TROWLE.

Singe we nowe, lettes see,
Some songe will I assaye:
All men nowe singe after me,
For musicke of me learne you maie.

Singe troly
loly troly loe.

Tunc cantabunt, et postea dicat Tercius Pastor:

Nowe wende we fourth to Beathlem,
That ys beste our songe to be,
To see the starre cleane maye,
The frute of that mayden freye.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Nowe folowe we the starre that shyneth,
Tell we come to that hollye stable;
To Bethelem bonne the lymes,
Folowe we it without anye fable.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Folowe we it, and hies full faste,
Suche a frende loth us to fayle;
Lanche on, I will not be the laste,
Upon Marye for to marvayle.

Hic vadunt versus Bethlem.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Stynte nowe, goe no more steppes,
For nowe the starre begineth to stonde;
Harvye, that bene our good happes,
We seene by our Savyour founde.

Hic apparet et dicat angelus:

Sheapardes, of this sighte
Be ye not afrighte,
For this is Godes mighte,
Take this in mynde:
To Bethelem nowe righte,
Ther you shall se in sighte,
That Christe is borne to nighte,
To ken all mankinde.

TROWLE.

To Bethlem take we the waye,
For with you I thinke to wende,
That Prince of peace for to praye,
Heaven to have at our ende.
And singe we all, I rede,
Some mirth to his magistie;
For certen nowe sheewe it in deed,
The kinges sonne of heaven is he.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Sym, Sym, sickerlye
Heare I see Marye,
And Jesus Christe faste by,
Lapped in haye.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Kneyle we downe in hye,
And praye we hym of mercye,
And welckome hym worthelye,
That wo dose awaie.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Awaye all our wo is,
And many mans moe is!

Christe Lorde, let us kysse
The crache or the clothes.

TROWLE.

Solace nowe, to see this,
Buildes in my breste blesse,
Never after to doe amysse
Thinges that hym looth is.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Whatever this oulde man that heare is,
Take heede howe his head is whore,
His beirde is like a buske of breyers,
With a pound of heaire about his mouth and more.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

More is this marvayle to me nowe,
For to nape greatlye hym nedes;
Hartles is he nowe
For aye to his heales he heedes.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Why, with his beirde, though it hydes,
Righte well to her he heedes;
Worthy wighte, witte woulde,
Will we warne us worthye.

MARIA.

Sheapardes, southlye I see
That my sonne you heither sente,
Through Godes mighte in magistie,
That in me lighte and heare is lente.
This man maried was to me,
For no syne ner suche assente,

But to kepe my virginitie,
And trewlye for no other intente.

JOSEPHE.

Good men, Moyses takes in mynde,
As he was made through God allmighte,
Ordeyned lawes us to bynde,
Which that we shoulde kepe of righte,
Man and woman for to bynde,
Lawfullye them bouth to lighte,
To frutifye, as men maye fynde,
That tyme was wedded everye wighte.
Therfore wedded to her I was,
As lawe woulde, her for to lere,
For noyse, nor sclaunder, nor treasspas,
And through that deed the devill to dare;
As toulde me Gabrill full of grace,
When I hade trussed all my geyer,
To have flede and never to have seene her face,
By hym was I areaisted their.
For he sayde to me sleapinge
That shee lackles was of synne;
And when I harde that tockeninge,
From her durste I not tweyne.
Therfore goes fourth, preach this thinge,
All togeither and not in twene,
That you have seene youer heavenlye kinge
Comen, and all mankinde to myne.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Greate God, sittinge in thy throne,
That made all thinges of naughte,
Nowe we maie thanke thee icheone,
This is he that we have soughte.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Goe we nere anon,
With suche as we have broughte,
Ringe, bruche, ner precious stonne,
Lett us se yf we have oughte to proffer.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Let us doe hym homage.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Who shall goe firste? the page?

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Naye, ye be father of age,
Therfore ye muste offer.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

Heale, kinge of heaven so hie!
Borne in a crebe,
Mankinde unto thee
Thou haste made fullye.
Heale, kinge! borne in a maydens bower,
Proffittes did tell thou shouldest be our succore,
Thus clarkes doth saye.
Loe, I bringe thee a bell:
I praie thee save me from hell,
So that I maye with thee dwell,
And serve thee for [aye].

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Heale the, emperower of hell,
And of heaven allsoe!
The feynde shall thee fell,
That ever hath bene false.
Heale the, maker of the starre,

That stode us beforne ;
Heale the, blessed full barne,
Loe, sonne, I bringe thee a flaggette,
Theirby heinges a sponne,
To eate thy pottage with all at nonne,
As I my selfe full ofte tymes have done,
With harte I praie thee to take.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Heale, prince without anye peare,
That mankinde shall releeve !
Heale thee, froo unto Luciffier,
The which begyled Eve !
Heale the, granter of happe,
For in yeairth nowe thou dwelleste.
Loe, sonne, I bringe thee a cape,
For I have nothinge elles :
This gueifte, sonne, I bringe thee is but small,
And though I come the hyndmoste of all,
When thou shall them to thy blesse call,
Good Lorde, yet thinke on me.

TROWLE.

My dere, with dutye unto thee I me dresse,
My state and felloshippe that I doe not lose,
For to save me from all yle sicknes,
I offer unto thee a payer of my wifes oulde hose ;
For other dremes, my sonne,
Have I non for to geve,
That is worth anye thinge at all,
But my good harte, while I live,
And my prayers tell death doe me call.

THE FIRSTE BOYE.

Nowe to my fellowes this will I saye,
For in this place or that I wende awaie,

Unto yender childe let us goe and praye,
As our maisters hath done us beforne.

THE SECONDE BOYE.

And of suche goodes as we have heare
Let us offer to this prince so deare,
And to his mother that mayden cleare,
That of her bodye hade bene borne.

THE FYRSTE BOYE.

Abyde, syres, I will goe firste to yender kinge.

THE SECOUND BOYE.

And I will goe nexte to that lordinge.

THE THIRDE BOYE.

Then wilbe I the laste of this offeringe,
This can I saie no more.

THE FIRSTE [BOYE.]

Nowe, Lorde, for to geve thee have I nothinge,
Nether goulde, silver, bruche, ner ringe,
Nor no riche robes mete for a kinge,
That I have heare in store:
But that yt lackes a stoppell,
Take thee heare my well [fayer] bottill,
For it will houlde a good pottill,
In faith, I can geve thee no more.

THE SECOUNDE BOYE.

Lorde, thou arte of this virgine borne,
In full poore araye sittinge on her arme,
For to offer to thee I have no skorne,
Allthough thou be but a childe;
For jewell have I non to geve thee,

For to mantayne thy royall dignitie,
But my hude, then take it thee,
As thou arte god and man.

The Thirde Boye.

O, noble childe of thee!
Alas! what have I for thee,
Save onlye my pipe?
Elles trewlye nothinge,
Were I in the rockes or in,
I coulde make this pippe,
That all this woode shoulde ringe,
And quiver, as yt were.

The Fourth Boye.

Nowe, childe, allthough thou be comon from God,
And be God thy selfe in thy manhoode,
Yet I knowe that in thy childehoode
Thou wylte for sweete meate loke,
To pull downe aples, peares, and plumes,
Oulde Joseph shall not nede to hurte his thombes,
Because thou hast not pleintie of crombes,
I geve thee heare my nutthocke.

Primus Pastor.

Nowe fare well, mother and maye,
For of synne naughte thou wotteste,
Thou haste brought fourth this daie
Godes sonne of mighteste moste.
Wherfore men shall saye,
Blessed in everye coste and place
Be thou memoriall for me and for us all.
And that we maie from syne fall,
And stande ever in thy grace,
Our Lorde God be with thee.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

Brethren, let us all three
Singinge walke whomwardes;
Unkinde will I in no case be,
But preache ever that I can and crye,
As Gabryll taughte by his grace me,
Singinge awaye hense will I.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

Over the sea, and I maye have grace,
I will henge and aboute goe nowe,
To preache this in everye place,
And sheepe will I kepe non nowe.

TROWLE.

I redde we us agree
For our misdeedes amendes to make;
For so nowe I will,
And to that childe whollye me betake;
For ever sickerlie
Sheaphardes crafte heare I forsake,
And to an ancker heare by,
I will in my prayers wache and wake.

PRIMUS PASTOR.

And I am heare meke
To praise God to paie,
To walke by style and streete,
In wyldernes to walke ever;
And I will no man meete,
But for my livinge I shall them praie,
Barefoote on my feete,
And this will I live ever and aye.
For aye ever ones,
This worlde I fullye refuce,

My misse to amende with mones.
Torne to thy felowes and kisse,
I eylde, for in youth
We have bene felowes, i-wysse,
Therfore lende us your mouthe,
And frendlye let us kisse.

SECUNDUS PASTOR.

From London to Louth
Suche another sheaparde I not were.
Bouth framed and couth,
God grante you, amen.

TERCIUS PASTOR.

To that blesse bringe you,
Greate God, if thy wilbe.
Amen all singe you:
Good men, fares well!

TROWLE.

Well for to fare iche frende,
God of his mighte grante you;
For heare nowe we make an ende,
Fare well, for we goe from you nowe.

Finis. Deo gratias! per me, Georgi Bellin. 1592.
Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye.

VIII. THE THREE KINGS.

The Vintneres Playe.

Incipit pagina octava trium regum orientalium; et dicat Primus Rex.

PRIMUS REX.

Mightye God, in magistie,
That ruleth the people of Judye,
When thou one man will have pittye,
And his synnes for-bye,
Sende some tockeninge, Lorde, to me,
That same starre that I maye see,
That Balaham sayde shoulde rise and be,
In his prophescye.
For well I wotte for south, I wysse,
That his prophescye south is,
A starre shoulde rise betockeninge of blesse,
When Godes sonne is borne.
Therfore thes lordes and I [in] feare
In this mounte make our prayer,
Devoutlye onste in the yeaire,
For theirto we bene sworne.

SECUNDUS REX.

Yea, we that bene of Bethlems bloode,
That prophescieth of that sweete foode,
When Balacke, that kinge so woode,
To curse woulde he have made
Godes people of Isarell;

But power fayled hym everye deale,
To prophesscye mankindes heale
That tyme hape he hade.
Wherfore we kinges of his kinde,
I rede we take his wordes in mynde,
Grace in hym yf we maye finde,
That Godes sonne shalbe;
And goe we praye bouth on and all,
Into the mounte victoriall;
Peradventure such grace maie fall,
That starre that we maie see.

Tercius rex.

Sir, sickerlye ye reade on righte,
Unto that hill I will me dighte,
And their beseeke God almighte,
On us for to mynde;
Out of that starre to have some sighte,
Worshipe we all that sweete wighte
That Balaham to us beheighte,
That shall for-by mankinde.
Saye, fellowe, take this courser,
And abyde me righte heare.
Goe we, sires, to our praiers,
I rede nowe, in good faye;
I have done this manye a yeaire,
And my ansecestores that before me were.
Highe God, prince of power,
Thou comforte us to daye.

Hic descendent de equis, et ibunt in montem, et dicat

Primuz rexe.

Lorde, what tyme it is thy will,
Balahames prophesye to fulffill,

Thou geve us grace bouth lowde and still,
And by some signe us shewe.

SECUNDUS REX.

Yea, Lorde, though we be unworthy,
On thy men thou have mercye,
And of thy birth thou certifie
Heare to thy kinges three.

TERCIUS REX.

Lorde God, leader of Isarell,
That dyed for mankindes heale,
Thou come to us and not conseale,
But be our counsceler.

PRIMUZ REX.

Of all this worlde thou arte the weale,
That shalbe called Emanuell;
Deme thee, Lorde, with us to deale,
And grante us our praier.

Tunc apparebit stella.

PRIMUS REX.

A! sir rex, si veus ploitt,
Gardes sus sur vostre lest.

SECUNDUS REX.

Une esteile issi est,
Que, sir, vous reploist.

TERCIUS REX.

Aloies soit luy une semblant,
De une virgini portant,
Come le seamble de une enfante,
En brace apportement.

[PRIMUZ REX.]

A ! Lorde, blessed muste thou be,
That on thy people hase pittie !
Witterlye nowe witten we,
That wroughte is our askinge.

SECUNDUS REX.

That our prayers harde hase,
I leve full wel, by my lewtie !
For in the starre a childe I see,
And vereye tockeninge.

TERCIUS REX.

Lordes, I rede we hense hie :
For I dare saie, and nothinge lye,
Fulfilled is Balahams prophescye,
By this we maye well knowe.

Tunc reges iterum genuflectent, et angelus portans stellam, et dicat

PRIMUS REX.

Yea, leaste this be some fantasye,
Yet praye we all especiallye :
For yf he be borne verelye,
More signes he will us shewe.

ANGELLUS.

Rise up, you kinges three,
And comes anon after me
Into the lande of Judye,
As faste as you can hie ;
The childe ye seeke their shall ye see,
Borne all of a mayden freye,
That kinge of heaven and yeirth shalbe,
And all mankinde for-bye.

Heare the kinges rise upp, *et dicat*

PRIMUZ REX.

Lordes, hye we theider anon,
For we be bedden theider gone:
I will never byde, by my bone,
Tell I at hym be.

SECUNDUS REX.

Yea, sires, I rede us everyeichone,
Drombodaries to ride upon,
For sweifter beastes be their non;
On I have, ye shall se.

TERCIUS REX.

A drombodarye, in good faye,
Will goe lightlye one his waie
An hundreth myles upon a daye,
Suche beastes nowe take we.

PRIMUZ REX.

Lordes, and I well leve maye,
That childe woulde shorten well our waie,
That bringinge presentes to his paie,
And moste is of degreey.

Then the kinges goe downe to the beastes and ryde aboute.

PRIMUZ REX.

Alas! wher is the starre i-wente?
Our lighte awaie from us is glente;
Nowe wotte I not wher be we lente,
Nor wheitherwarde lies our waie.

SECUNDUS REX.

Praye we to God with good intente,
To whom we bringe our presente,
He will never suffer us to be shente,
That dare I bouldlye saye.

Tercius rex.

It is good that we inquier,
Yf anye the waie can us lere.—
Saye, belamye, that rydes their,
Tell us some tydinges.

The messinger.

Sir, tell me what your will is.

Primuz rex.

Can thou oughte saie what place or where
A childe is borne that crowne shall beare
And of Jewes be kinge?

Secundus rex.

We sawe the starre shyne verelye
In the este, in noble araye;
Therfore we come nowe this waye,
To worshippe hym with wyn.

Messinger.

Houlde your peace, sires, I you praye!
For yf kinge Herode heare you so saie,
He woulde goe woode, be my faye,
And flye out of his skynne.

Tercius rex.

And seith a kinge is soe nere,
Goe we to hym in all manere.

Messinger.

You maye well see he wonnes heare,
A palace in to dwell.
But maye he witte, withouten were,
That anye is borne of more power,

You bringe your selves in greate danger,
Such tydinges for to tell.

Heare the messinger goeth to the kinge, and the mynstrilles muste plaie.

O noble kinge and worthy conquerowre,
Crowned in goulde syttinge on hie,
Mahounde thee save longe in honoure!
Licens I requier to come [to] thee.
Tydinges nowe, my lorde, I shall you tell,
That these three kinges doe telle unto me.
From whense the be I knowe not well:
Yender the stande, as ye maie see.

PRIMUZ REXE.

Sir roye, royall and reverente,
Dieu vous gardes omnipotente!

SECUNDUS REX.

Nos sum[e]s veneus complent
Noveles de enquere.

HERODES.

Staffe. *Bien soies venues, royes gente,*
Me detes toute vetere entente.

TERCIUS REX.

Infante querens de grande parente
Et roy de celi et terre.

HERODES.

Sires, advise ye what you sayen,
Suche tydinges makes my harte unfayne;
I rede you take thes wordes againe,
For feare of velanye.

Ther is non so greate that me dare gaine
To take my realme, and to attayne
My power, but he shall have paine
And be punished appeartlye.
I kinge of kinges, non so keene;
I soveraigne, sir, as well is seeme;
I tyrrante that maie both take and teene
Castill, tower, and towne.
I weilde this worlde, withouten wene,
I beate all them unbuxsome bene,
I drive the devilles all bydeene
Depe in hell adowne.
For I am kinge of all mankinde,
I byde, I beate, I lose, I bynde,
I maister the moone, take this in mynde,
That I am moste of mighte.
I am the greateste above degree,
That is, that was, that ever shalbe;
The sonne it dare not shine on me,
And I byde hym goe downe;
No raine to fall shall nowe be freye,
Nor no lorde have that libertie,
That dare abyde, and I byde fleye,
But I shall crake his crowne.
Ner fare nor nere thad doe me nye;
Who wrathes me, I shall them nye,
For everye freke I dare defie,
That nill me paye ne please.
But ye be bayne I shall you beate:
Ther is no man for you shall treate.
All for wroth see howe I sweate,
My harte is not at ease. Staffe.
For all men maye witte and see,
Bouth he and ye all three,
That I am kinge of Gallalye,

Whatsoever he saies or dose.
Sworde.
What the devill shoulde this be!
A boye, a grome, of loe degreey,
Shoulde raigne againste my royaltie,
And make me but a goose,
Cast upp.
That ringes and raignes so royallye!
All grace and goodnes I have to geve,
Their is no prince but he shall please
To doe my hartes ease.
Staffe and another gowne.
But nowe ye maie bouth heare and see
That I reconned up royaltie:
I redde you al be ruled by me,
And founde me for to please.

PRIMUZ REX.

Sir, we see the starre appeare
In the easte, withouten were,
In a marvelous manere,
Togeither as we cane praye.

SECUNDUS REX.

We see never non so cleare:
By it the waye we can lere,
But when we came to this lande here,
Then vanished yt awaie.

TERCIUS REX.

By prophescye well wotten we,
That a childe borne shoulde be,
To rule the people of Judye,
As was sayde manye a yeaire.

HERODES.

This is false, by my lewtie!
For in maungere of you all three.

This realme moves all on me.
Other kinges shall non be here.
But seinge you speake of prophesye,
I will witte anon in hye,
Wheither ye speake south or lye,
My clarke sone shall see.—
Sir docter, that arte cheifeste of clergye,
Loke up thy bokes of prophescye,
Of Daniell, David, and Esay,
And what thou seeiste tell thou me.
Thes kinges be come a farre waie,
To seeke a childe, I harde them saye,
That shoulde be borne in this cuntreye,
My kingdome to destroye.
Seeke iche leafe, I thee praie,
And what thou fyndes in good faye,
Tell nowe heare, for I dare laye,
That all these lordes lye.

DOCCTOR.

Naye, my lorde, be you boulde,
I troe no prophesye before woulde
Wryte anye thinge your harte to coulde,
Or your righte to denye.
But seith your grace at this tyme woulde
That I the prophettes declare shoulde,
Of Christes cominge, as the have toulde,
The truth to certifie;
I beseeke your royall magistie,
With paciens of your benignitie,
The truth to heare, and pardon me
Their sayinges to declare.

HERODES.

Naye, my trewe clarke, that will not I
Debate with thee, therfore in hie

Loke well on everye prophescye,
For nothinge that thou spare.
But searche the truth of Esaii,
Ezechiell, Mauum, and Jeremye,
Micheadeas, and Abdies, and Zachrye,
Of Christe what the doe saie;
Loke also upon Malachie,
Aggeus, Ozeas, and Sopheni,
Joell, Amoes, and Balahams, in hie,
Loke non be lefte awaie.

Non auferetur sceptrum de Juda, et dux de femore ejus, donec veniat qui mittendus est, et erit ipse exspectatio gentium. Genesis quadragesimo nono. Et dicat doctor:

DOCTER.

The holye Scriptures makes declaracion
By patrickes and prophettes of Christes nativitie,
When Jacobe proffessyed by plaine demonstracion,
Sayde the realme of Juda and eke the regalitie
From that generacion never tacken shoulde be,
Untell the were come that moste mightie is,
Sente from the father kinge of heavenlye blesse.
And nowe fulfilled is Jacobes prophescye.
For kinge Herode, that is nowe raigninge,
Is noe Jewe borne, nor of that progenye,
But a stranger by the Romanes made their kinge,
And the Jewes knowe non of their bloode sendinge,
By succesion to clayme the septer and regallitie,
Wherfore Christe is nowe borne our kinge or messie.

HERODES.

A bill. That is false, by Mahounde full of mighte!
That oulde vylarde Jacobe, doted for age,
Shall withhoulde with no prophescye the tytle [and right]

Of Romanes hie conqueste, which to me in herit[age]
Is fallne to me for ever, as a prince of highe parage;
Yf anye other kinge or messye intende it to wyn,
His heade from his bodye with this sworde I shall twayne.

Cum venerit sanctus sanctorum, cessabit unctio vestra. Et dicat

DOCTER.

Danyell, fulfilled with heavenlye grace,
Prophecied also by devyne insperacion,
That when he was come that all holye was,
Moste holyeste in yeairth, to take his habitacion
In the wombe of a virgen, and by his blessed incarnacion
Out of Satanes bande to deliver mankinde,
Whom synne originallye moste pitiouslye did bynde,
Then bouth uncions, sacrifices, and rittes ceremoniall,
Of the Oulde Testamente, with legall observacion,
Shall utterlye cease, and take ther ende fyniall,
Through Christes cominge, which, for mans salvacion,
A Newe Testament shoulde ordeyne by devyne operacion,
Offeringe hym selfe in sacrifice for mankindes offence,
Which from heaven was exiled through his greate necligens.

HERODES.

Fye on that dreme, reader! suche doterdes never shall,
Ner no sleepye sloggarde, make my righte title seace!
But I shall knightlye kepe it, whatsoever befall,
Againste that yonge godlynge, and yf he onste doe presse
This kingdome to clayme, or put me to destresse,
His heade offe shall I hewe,—yet loke yf thou fynde their
Wher this boye is borne for whom these kinges enquier.

DOCCTER.

Micheias, inspired with ghostlye insperacion,
Prophescieth that Beathlem a childe fourth bringe,

Ruler of Godes people and of the Jewes nacion,
Shoulde he be borne of Isarell to be kinge;
Also Esaii and Jeramye full vertus of beinge,
With divers other more fulfilled with grace,
Of Christes cominge prophescied when the livinge was.

Ambulabunt gentes in lumine tuo, et reges in splendore ortus tui. Esaii sexagesimo.

Esaii, unto whom the spirete of prophescye
Was singulerlye geven through the hollye ghoste,
In this tyme prophescied this kinge witterlye,
And folcke of strange nacion and sundrye coste,
That princes birth to magnifie which of might is moste,
Shoulde walke in greate lighte and brightnes appeare,
As did to thes kinges in a starre shyninge cleare.

Effundam super parvulum istum furorem meum et super consilium juvenum, disperdem parvulos deforis, et juvenes in plateis morientur gladio meo.

HERODES.

Caste downe the sworde.

Alas! what presumpscion shoulde move that pevishe page,
Or anye elvishe godlinge, to take from me my crowne;
But, by Mahound! that boye for all his outrage,
Shall dye under my hande, that elfe and vile congion!
And all his partackers I shall slea and beate downe,
And bouth hym and his distroccion make.
Such vengance and creweltie on them all I will take,
That non such a slaughter was seene or harde before,
Seith Athalye heare raigned, that fell and furious queene,
Which made slea all men children that of kinges blood were.
When her sonne was dead; so, for to wreeke my teene,
I shall hewe that harlote with my bright sorde
Into peces smalle:—yea, loke and serche againe,
Yf these kinges shall hym fynde and his presence attayn.

DOCTER.

Reges Tharsis et insule munera offerent: reges Arabum et Saba dona adducent. Psalmo septuagesimo primo.

David, of all propettes called moste prepotente,
Prophesied that kinges of Thrasis and Arabia
With misticall geiftes shoulde come and presente
That lorde, that kinge, and hie messye,
Of Abrahames seede descendid liniallye;
Which kinges with greate treasure here in presence.
My lorde, by prophescye is provid you beforne,
That in Bethlem should be borne
A childe, to save that was forlorne,
And rule all Isarell.

HERODES.

By cockes soule! thou arte forsworne;
Have done these bokes were rente and torne; Breake a sworde.
For he shalbe no kinge in crowne,
But I fullye in my wele;
And maugere David, that sheapard with his slinge,
Esay, Jeremye, with all their ofspringe,
Heare gette no other messye nor kinge,
From my righte tytile to expell.
What a devill is this! to saie Caste up.
That I shoulde be disprovid and put awaie,
Seinge my righte is so vereye
For a boyes boste!
This realme is myne and shalbe aye,
Manfullye mentayne it while I maie,
Though he bringe with hym to daie
The devill and all his hoste.—
But goe fourth, you kinges three, Caste up.
And inquier if it so be;

But all gates come againe to me,
For you I thinke to feede.
And yf he be of suche degree,
Hym will I honouer as doe ye,
As falles for his dignitie,
In worde, thoughte, and deed.

Primuz rex.

By leve, sir, and have good daie,
Tell we come againe this waie.

Secundus rex.

Sir, as sone as ever we maie,
And as we seene, so shall we saie.

Tercius rex.

And of his riches and of his araye,
From you we shall not leave.

Herodes.

Fare well, lordes, in good faye,
But hye you faste againe!—
Out, alas! what the devill is this!
For shame almoste I fare amysse,
For was I never so woe, I wysse,
For wroth I am nere woode!
For everye man maye well saie this,
That I mentayne my relme amisse,
To let a boye inheritte my blesse,
That never was of my blood.
But yet the lesse it greves me
That I let goe these kinges three;
For I shall knowe nowe which is he
When the comen againe.
Then will the tell me in what cuntrey

The boye and pigge when the kinges are gone.

Staffe.

That this boye borne is he;
Then shalbe tacke bouth the and he,
And that will make me fayne.
By cockes soule! come the againe,
All three traytors shalbe slayne,
And that same swedlinge sweayne,
I shall choppe of his heade. Sworde.
Godes grace shall the not gaine,
Nor no prophescye save them from paine.
That rocked reball, and I maie raigne,
Rufullye shalbe his rede.
By Mahounde full of might!
To marowe I will sende after my knightes,
To rule my relme and my rightes
Againste this boyes boste;
And rayse the cuntrey on everye syde,
All that ever maie goe or ryde,
So shall this boye lose his pride,
For all his greateste boste.
This boste doth me so greate anoye, Caste up.
That I waxe cleane dulle and cleane drye:
Have done, and fill the wyne in hie,
I dye but I have drinke!
Fill faste and lett the cuppes flye,
For I muste ordayne curyouslye,
Againste these kinges cominge.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me, Georgium Bellin. 1592.
Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye.

IX. THE OFFERING AND RETURN OF THE THREE KINGS.

The Marcers Playe.

Pagina nona de presentatione sive oblatione trium regum: primus rex.

PRIMUZ REX.

Mightye God, moste of mayne,
To honoure thee we maye be fayne,
The starre I see it come againe,
That was out of our sighte.

SECUNDUS REX.

Thy lordshippe to us thou ney layne,
That for mankinde woulde suffer payne;
Thou sende us grace, if thou be gayne,
To come to thee to nighte.

TERCIUS REX.

A! Lorde, honoured be thou aye,
For nowe we shall knowe well the waye;
I will folowe it, in good faye,
My forwarde to fulfill.

PRIMUZ REX.

I hope without dreed to daie
To see that childe in his araye.—
But me thinkes, lordes, by my faye,
The starre it standeth stille.

SECUNDUS REX.

That is a signe we be nere,
But highe hall see I non heare;
To a childe of suche power
This howsinge standeth loe.

TERCIUS REX.

Nowe well I wotte, withouten were,
Without pride he will apeare,
To make men meeke in such manere,
An exsample us to shewe.

PRIMUZ REX.

The starre yender over the stable is,
I wotte we be not gone amisse,
For it hath storred ever or this,
And nowe their it is glente.

SECUNDUS REX.

I wotte he wonnes here, i-wysse,
And this symple howse is his.
Ordayne we nowe that kinge of blesse
Apeartlye our presente.

TERCIUS REX.

What presente beste will for hym fall,
Caste we here amonge us all;
For though he lye in an oxe stalle,
His mighte is never the lesse.

PRIMUZ REX.

Kinge of Jewes we shall hym call,
Theirfore of me have he shall,
That am his subjecte and his thralle,
Goulde, or I passe.

For in our lande in the manere
To aproche no kinge nere,
But dayntie geiftes, riche and dere,
After his dignitie.
And for a kinge goulde fayer and cleare
Is moste commendable, therfore nowe heare
He shall have that of me.
Also it seemes by this place,
That littill treasuer his mother hase;
Therfore helpe her in this case,
Goulde shalbe my presente.

SECUNDUS REX.

And I will offer, through Godes grace,
Incence that noble savoure mase;
Stincke of the stable it shall waste,
Ther as the be lente.

TERCIUS REX.

And myrre is beste my offeringe to be,
To anoynte hym, as thinkes me,
The childes members, head and knye,
And other lymes all.
Thus shall we honouer hym all three
With thinges that falle for his degree,
Touchinge manhoode and his dieatie,
These geiftes will wel befalle.

PRIMUZ REX.

You saye well, lordes, witterlye,
As touchinge goulde see maye I,
It shoulde be geven hym dulye,
Because of precialitie;
Seinge he shalbe kinge moste mightie,
Tribute he must have trewlye,

And goulde therfore witterlye
Is beste, as thinkes me.

SECUNDUS REX.

And seith he hath in hym godheade,
Me thinkes, as eate I breade,
Incense to geve hym through my reade,
In name of sacrifice;
For that maye no waie be leade,
Seinge he of holye chourche is heade,
More dewe geiftes, if I shoulde be deade,
I can not devise.

TERCIUS REX.

You saie full well bouth, sires towe:
And myrre is good me thinkes also,
Seith he for man will suffer woe,
And dye on roode treey;
Myrre that putes hym synne frooe,
And saves man from rottinge woe,
For it is beste to balmbe his thoo,
That shall he have of me.

PRIMUZ REX.

By these geiftes three of good araye,
Three thinges uuderstande I maie,
A kinges power, south to saie,
By goulde heare in my hande;
And for his godhead lasteth aye,
Incense we muste geve hym to daie;
And bodelye death also, in good faye,
By myrre I understande.

SECUNDUS REX.

Goulde love also maie signifie,
For it men geven not commonlye,

But thoes the loven hartelye,
This childe as we done all;
An[d] incense tockeneth, leeve I,
Orysones and praiers devoutlye;
Myrre death that man hath bodelye,
And all these thinges shall falle.

Tercius rexe.

By goulde, that we to bringe are bounde,
The richeste mettall of renowne,
Skillfullye understande we mone
Moste precious godheade;
And incense maye wel be saide
A roote of greate devocion;
By myrre, that waves corruptscion,
Cleane fleshe bouth quicke and deade.
And sickerlye this knowen we,
He wantes non of these three,
For full godheade in hym hase he,
As goulde maie signifie;
And soule devoute in hym muste be,
To come out of the Trenitie,
And cleane fleshe we happen to se
In hym full hastelye.

Primuz rexe.

Nowe we have proveid it here,
These geiftes be to hym moste dere,
Goe we fourth in good manere,
And make we our presente.

Secundus rexe.

The starre it shines faier and cleare,
Over this stable aye entier;
Here is his woninge withouten were,
And hearein is he lente.

TERCIUS REX.

A fayer mayden yender I see,
An oulde man sittinge at her knee,
A childe also, as thinkes me,
Three persons theirin are.

PRIMUZ REX.

I saide in certen that this is he,
That we have soughte from cuntrey;
Therfore nowe, with all honistie,
To honour I will that barron.

Tunc aperiet sciathum cum auro primuz rex.

Heale be thou! Christe and Messye,
That from Gode arte comen kindlye,
Mankinde of ball for to for-bye,
And into blesse bringe;
We knowe well, by prophescye
Of Moyses, David, and Esay,
And Balaham of our ancestrie,
Of Jewes thou shalbe kinge.
Therfore as falleth for thy crowne,
Goulde I have heare readie bowne,
To honouer thee with greate renowne,
After thy royaltie;
Take heare, Lorde, my intenscion,
That I doe with devocion,
And geve me here thy beneson,
Or that I goe from thee.

SECUNDUS REX.

Heale be [thou]! Christe Emanuell,
Thou comen arte for mans heale,
And for to wyne againe that wayle

That Adam put awaye.
Prophettes of thee everye on saie,
Both Esaii and Ezechiell,
And Abraham mighte not consaile
The truth of thee to saye.
Bushope, I wotte, thou muste be,
Therfore nowe, as thinkes me,
Insence will fall beste for thee,
And that nowe heare I bringe:
In tockeninge of thy dignitie,
And that office of spirialitie,
Receive, Lorde, heare of me
Dovutlye my offeringe.

TERCIUS REX.

Heale, conquerower of all mankinde!
To doe mercie thou haste mynde,
The devilles bande to unbynde,
And releve all thyne.
A full faier waie thou can finde
To hanse us and put hym behynde,
Through thy passion to unbynde
Thy people that bene in payne.
For thou shall mende us through thy mighte,
Dye and rise the thirde nighte,
To recover againe our righte,
And breake the devilles bande;
Myrre to thee here have I dighte,
To balme thy bodye faier and brighte,
Receive my presente, sweete wighte,
And blesse me with thy hande.

GOD.

You be welckome, kinges three,
Unto my mother and to me,

And into the land of Judye,
And heare I geve you my blessinge.

MARIA.

You, royall kinges in riche araye,
The highe father of heaven I praie
To eylde you your good deed to daie,
For his mickell mighte;
And geve you will nowe and allwaie
To yeairne the life that lasteth aye,
And never to fall out of the faye,
That in your hartes is pighte;
And leve, lorde, withouten were,
That to my sonne you shalbe deare,
That hym to daie hath honoured heare,
And me also for his sake;
When tyme is come intyre,
To prove his strenghte and power,
To hym you shalbe leffe and deare,
That dare I undertake.

JOSEPHE.

You kinges all, comlye of kinde,
Faithfull you shall it fynde,
This menskye that God will have in mynde,
And quitte you well your meede.
And leeves well, of no mans strynte
Is he not gotten by leffe of kinde,
That to beleven are full blynde,
For I knowe it indeed:
This mayden was betacken me,
When I hade loste my jollitie,
And fayled mighte and postie
Synne for to assaye;
But for God woulde in chastitie

That we shoulde togeither be,
Keper of her virginitie
I have bene manye a daie.
Therfore I wotte for south, i-wysse,
Cleane mayden that shee is,
And with man did never amisse,
And therof be you boulde;
But of the Holye Ghoste this is,
For to bringe mankinde to blesse,
And this childe is vereye his,
So Gabrille me toulde.

ANGELLUS.

I warne you, comlye kinges three,
My lorde woulde you not spilled be,
Theirfore he sende you worde by me
To torne another waie;
Herodes felloweshipe you shall fleye,
For your harme ordaynde hase he,
Theirfore goe not through his cuntreye,
Nor the gate you came to daie.

PRIMUZ REXE.

A! highe Lorde, that we honouer heare,
That warnes us in this manere,
Elles hade we wende, withouten were,
To hym that woulde us spille.

SECUNDUS REX.

Yea, Lorde, as thou can us lere,
We will doe to our power.

TERCIUS REX.

Goe we hense all in feare,
And his byddinge fulfill.

PRIMUS REX.

Fare well, sir Jasper, brother to you,
Kinge of Thrasis moste worthye;
Fare well, sir Balcsare, to you I bowe,
I thanke you of your companye;
He that made us to mete on playne,
And offered to Marye in her jasane,
Sende us saffe and sounde againe
To the lande that we came froo.

SECUNDUS REX.

You kinges, I saie veramente,
Seinge God of his grace us heither sente,
We will doe his commaundmente,
Whatsoever befall;
Therfore stande we not in doute,
For to walke our lande aboute,
And of his birth that we maie talke,
Bouth to greate and smalle.

TERCIUS REX.

Fare well, sir kinges, bouth in feare,
I thanke you bouth of your good cheare,
But yet my witte is in a were,
Leste Herode make us some trayne;
He that shaped saie and sand,
Sende us saffe into our lande!
Kinges towe, geve me your hande,
Fare well and have good daie.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me, Georgi Bellin.
Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye. 1592.

X. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS.

The Gouldesmythes and Massons Plaie.

Pagina decima de occisione Innocentium et Herodis tirannica perswasione, et dicat

HERODES.

Princes, prelates of price,
Barrones in balmer and byse,
Beware of me all that be wise,
That weldes all at my will!
Saye noe man anye thinge is his,
But onlye at my devise;
For all this worlde lyes
To spare and eke to spill.
My subjeckes all that heare be sette,
Barrones, burges, and baronete,
Be baynd to me, or you I beate,
And at my byddinge be.
For leves all this, withouten lette,
That I will doe as I have hette,
Marye that mysbegotten marmosette
That thinkes to marre me.
And these false traytores that me beheighte
To have comen againe the same nighte,
By another waie have tacken their flighte,
This waie durste the not take.
Therfore that boye, by God allmighte!

Shalbe slayne sone in your sighte,
And, though it be againste the righte,
A thousand for his sake.
Alas ! what purpose had that page,
That is so yonge and tender of age,
That woulde bereve my heritage,
That am so mylde of mighte?
For south that shrewe was wonderouse sage,
Againste me anye warre to wage ;
That ricked reballe, for all his rage,
Shall not reave me my righte.
But seith it maye non other be,
But these kinges are gone from me,
And that shrewe woulde have my soveraigntye,
I thinke to put hym downe ;
All the knaves children in this cuntrey
Shall by his guyle, so mote I thee,
Because I knowe not which is hee,
All for his sake shalbe slayne.
Howe ! Prittie Pratte, my messinger !
Come heither to me, withouten were,
For thou muste goe with hastie beare
Into Judye this daie,
After my dughtie and comlye knightes,
And byde them hye with all their mightes,
And the lete for no fightes,
Bringe them all without delaye.

PRECO.

Yes, my lorde of hie renowne,
To doe your heistes I am bowne,
Lightlye to leape over dale and downe,
And speede yf I were their.
Fare well, my lorde in magistie,
For on my jorneye I will hye me.

HERODE.

Nowe mightie Mahound be with thee!
And ever to be in feare! //

PRECO.

Howe! awake out of your slepe!
Sir Grymbalde and sir Lancler depe,
And to me you take good kepe,
For heither I am sente;
My lorde kinge Herode begines to swaine,
For a shrewe woulde have his crowne,
And this bereve hym of his renowne,
And sone woulde have hym shende.

PRIMUZ MILES.

Welckome, messinger, that arte so gente,
Thes tydinges which my lorde hase sente
The bene welckome veramente,
With thee nowe will I wende.

SECUNDUS MILES.

Messinger, I will, in good faye,
Wende with you this same daie,
To here what my lorde will saie,
Of this matter to make an ende.

PRECO.

Heale, comlye kinge, sittinge in see,
Heare bene these knightes comen to thee,
That be men of greate degree,
To heare of your talente.

HERODES.

Messinger, for thy good deed,
Righte well shall I quite thy mede,

Have heare of me, to doe thee spede,
Righte a gaye garmente.

PRECO.

Grante mercye, lorde regente,
Well am I pleased to myne intente,
Mightie Mahound that I have mente,
Kepe you in this steade.

PRIMUZ MILES.

Sir Lanscler depe, what saye ye?
This is the fayereste kinge that ever I see.

SECUNDUS MILES.

This daie, under the sonne shyninge,
Is ther non so semlie a kinge.

PRIMUZ MILES.

Heale, comlye kinge! crowned in goulde,
Eich kinge and keison bendes at your becke,
Yf any were that with your grace feight woulde,
Such strockes for your sake sore shalbe sette.

SECUNDUS MILES.

Yf hym we maye take or gette,
The devill oughte hym debte,
And so he shalbe quitte,
Suche maisteryes for to make.

HERODES.

Welckome, our knightes, that be so gente,
Nowe will we tell you our intente,
What is the cause we for you sente
So sone and hastelie.

Yster daie to this cittie,
When we were in our royaltie,
Ther came to us kinges three,
And toulde us ther intente,
To seeke a childe that borne shoulde be
That was saide by prophesye,
That shoulde be kinge of Judye,
And of manye another lande.
We gave them leve to search and see,
And come againe to this cittie,
And yf he were of suche degree,
We woulde not hym withstande;
But and the hade comen againe
All three traytors shoulde have bene slayne,
And also that leither sweyne,
And al for his sake.
Out, alas! what maie this be?
For I knowe not which is he,
Therfore all knaves children in this cittie
On them shall fall the wracke;
For we knowe not that childe well,
Though we therfore shoulde go to hell,
All the children of Isarell
We deme them to be slayne.
Counsceler, what is thy rede?

DOCCTER.

Deme them, lorde, for to be deade:
For that is beaste, as eate I bread,
To cache that litter swayne.
Commaund your knightes anon in hie
To goe to the lande of Gallalie,
And into the lande of Judye
To slaye all that the maie fynde.

HERODES.

That is well sayde, my counsceler!
But yet I borne as doth the fier,
What for wrath, what for ire,
Tell this be broughte to ende.
Therfore, my knightes good and keyne,
Have done belive, goe wreche my teene,
Goe sleye that shrewe, let it be seene
And you be men of mighte;
Prove manfulye what the bene,
That nowe awaie from you fleyne,
Drive downe ther durtye arscies bydene,
And sone that the were slayne!
So shall I kepe that vile counjon,
That thus would reave me of my crowne.
Therfore, my bachlers, make ye boune,
And founde to save my righte.
You muste hye you out of this towne
To Bethlem, as faste as you mone,
All knaves children, by my crowne,
You muste slaie this nighte.

PRIMUZ MILES.

Alas! lorde and kinge of blesse,
Sende you after us for this?
A vellany it were, i-wisse,
For my fellowe and me,
To slea a shetton arsced shrewe,
A lade his heade mighte I hewe;
For riballes are not in this rowe,
But kinges of greate degree.

SECUNDUS MILES.

My leffe lorde of greate renowne,
We shall wrecke us as we mone,

Wheither he be kinge or champion,
Stiffer then ever Sampson was,
Seckerlie I shall drive them downe;
But for to kill suche a congeon,
Me shames sore, by Mahounde!
To goe in anye plase.

HERODE.

Naye, ne it is nether on nor towe
That ye shall slea, as mote I goe,
But a thousande and yet moe,
Takes this in your mynde;
Because I knowe not which that shrewe is,
Therfore, leste you of hym misse,
You muste slea for south, i-wisse,
All that you maie fynde.
You shall walke farre and nere,
Into Bethlem, spare for no bere,
All knaves children within towe yeaire
And one daies oulde,
Slea them downe on and all,
So shall you meete with that stall,
That woulde my kingdome clayme and call,
And my welth also welde.

PRIMUZ MYLES.

Hit shalbe donne, lorde, in hie,
Shall non be lefte witterlie,
We shall goe searche by and bye
In Bethlem all aboute;
And wrecke your teene full tenderlie,
Leve non unslayne sickerlye,
So shall we soone that shrewe destroye,
And kill hym in that rowte.

Tunc ibunt milites simul.

Knowes, riche, you be raye,
To Bethlem that barro I am bowne,
With this speare I thinke to assaie
To kille manye a smalle congion;
These congeones in the clowtes I will kill,
And stowtlye with strockes them destroye,
Shall never on skape by my will,
All babes for that boye full sore shall bye,
Shall never non over passe
Of towe yeaires age and lesse;
And this boye that kinge crowned was,
Shall not skape without searche.

SECUNDUS MILES.

Therfore to me take good kepe,
My name is Sir Lanchler depe.
The that me teene I laie to slepe
On everyeiche a syde;
Through Bethlem I will springe,
For I muste nowe at your bydinge,
Righte all dowen shall I dinge
Thes lades everyechon;
And then that false geldinge,
That borne was so yonge,
He shall not for nothinge
Awaie from us gone.

PRIMUZ MILES.

Fare well, my lorde, and have good daie,
For hardlye I dare this saie,
Not for no boste, in good faye,
Yt is not my manere;
I woulde I mighte fynde in my waie
Sampson in his beste araye,
To loke wheither I durste afraye
To feighte with hym righte heare.

HERODE.

Nay, ne I knowe well or thou sweare,
That thou art a dughtie man of ware,
And though Sampson were heare,
Sone he shoulde be slayne.
But yet my witte is in a were,
Wheither ye shall fynde that solingere:
But spede you faste, for my prayer,
And hye you faste agayne.

Tunc ibunt milites, et veniet angelus:

[ANGELLUS.]

Josephe, arise, and that anon,
Into Egipte thou muste gone,
And Marye also from your fone,
This is my Lordes will;
Ther staye, leste this childe be slayne,
Tell I warne thee to come againe:
False Herode woulde fayne
Jesus for to spille.

JOSEPHE.

A ! Lorde, blessed muste thou be,
Theider anon we will fleye,
Have we companye of thee,
We will hye on our waie.

ANGELLUS.

Yea, companye we shall you beare,
Tell that you be comen their.
Herode lokes hym you to feare,
As faste as ever he maye.

JOSEPHE.

Marye, sister, nowe we muste flitte,
Upon my asse nowe shalte thou sitte,

Into Egipte tell we hitte,
The angell will us leade.

MARIA.

Sir, ever more lowde and still,
Your tallente I shall fulfill:
I wote it is my lordes will
I doe as you me reade.

ANGELLUS.

Come nowe fourth, in Godes name,
I shall you sheilde from all shame,
And you shall see, my leiffe dame,
A thinge to your likinge;
For Mahometes bouth on and all,
That men on Egipte godes can calle,
At your cominge downe shall fall,
When I begyne to singe.

PRIMUZ MILES.

Haste downe, fellowe, hastes downe faste,
That these queines were downe caste,
And their children in haste,
And kille them all to clowtes.

SECUNDUS MILES.

Yea, sires, we dwell all to longe,
Therfore goe we them amonge,
The hopen to have some wronge
That gone so faste awaie.

PRIMUZ MULIER.

Whom calleste thou queine, skabde biche,
Thy dame thy daster was never suche,
Shee borned a knave eiche stiche,
Yet did I never non.

SECUNDUS MULIER.

Be thou so hardye, I thee behette,
To handle my sonne that is so sweete,
This distaffe and thy heede shall meete,
Or we hense gone.

PRIMUZ MILES.

Dame, abyde and let me see
A knaves childe if that it be;
The kinge hase commaunded me
All suche for to areiste.

PRIMUS MULIER.

Areaste, riball, for thee,
Thou lyes, by my lewtie!
Therfore I rede that faste thou fleye,
And let me have my peace.

SECUNDUS MILES.

Dame, thy sonne, in good faye,
He muste of me learne a plaie,
He muste hoppe, or I goe awaie,
Upon my speare ende.

PRIMUS MULIER.

Out and out! and wayle a waie!
That ever I [did] abide this daie;
On strocke I will assaye
To geve, or that I wende.

SECUNDUS MULIER.

Out! out on this teiffe!
My love, my lorde, my life, my leffe!
Did never man nor woman greffe,
To suffer suche tormente;

But yet wrocken I will be :—
Have here on, towe, or three !
Beare the kinge this from me,
And that I it hym sende.

Primus miles.

Come heither to me, dame Pernell,
And shewe me heare thy sonne snell :
For the kinge hath beden me quaile
All that we fynde mon.

Primus mulier.

My sonne ! ney, stronge theife,
For as I have good preffe,
Thou do my childe anye greffe,
I shall crake thy crowne.

[*Tunc miles transfodiet primum puerum, et super lancea accipiet.*]

Out, out ! and woes me !
Theffe, thou shalbe hanged hie !
My childe is dead nowe I se,
My sorowe maie not cease.
Thou shalt be hanged on a tree,
And all thy fellowes with thee,
All the men in this cuntreye
Shall not make thee peace.
Have thou this, thou fowle harlote !
And thou knight to make a knotte,
And on buffitte with this bote
Thou shall have to bowte ;
And thou this, and thou this !
Though you bouth shitte and pesse,
And yf you think we do amisse,
To buske ye to mote.

SECUNDUS MILES.

Dame, shewe me thy childe here,
He muste hoope upon my speare,
And it anye pentill beare,
I muste teache hym a plaie.

SECUNDUS MULIER.

Naye, frecke, thou shall faile,
My childe shall thou not assaile;
He hath towe holes under his tayle,
Kisse, and thou maye assaie.
For and thou do me any harme,
Or my childe upon my arme,
I shall found to kepe thee warme,
Be thou never so wood.

Tunc secundus miles transfodiet secundum puerum.

Out, out, out, out!
You shalbe hanged the rowte,
Theffe be ye never so stowte!
Full fowle ye have done.
This childe was tacken to me
To loke towe, theifes; who be ye?
He was not myne, as you maie se,
He was the kinges sonne.
I shall tell while I maie drye,
His childe was slayne before my eye.
Theeives, you shalbe hanged hie,
Maie I come to his halle.
But, or I goe, have thou one!
And thou another, Sir John!
For to the kinge I will anon,
To plainte upon you all.

Tunc ibit ad Herodem.

Loe, lorde, loke and see
The childe that thou toke to me,
Men of thyn owne meanye
Have slayne it, here the bene.

HERODES IRATUS.

Fie, hore, fie! God geve thee pyne,
Why did thou saie that childe was not myne?
But it is vengance, as drinke I wyne,
And that is nowe well seene.

SECUNDUS MULIER.

Yes, lorde, the se well arighte
Thy sonne was like to have bene a knighte,
For in goulde harnes he was dighte,
Painted wounderous gaye;
Yet was I never so sore afrighte,
When the speares through hym thrighte,
Lorde, so littill was my mighte,
When the beganne to fraye.

HERODES.

He was righte sicker in silke araye,
In goulde and pearle that was so gaye,
The mighte well knowe, by his araye,
He was a kinges sonne;
What the devill is this to saie!
Why were thy wittes so awaie?
Coulde thou not speake, coulde thou not praie,
And saie it was my sonne?
Alas! what the devill is this to mone?
Alas! my daies bene nowe done;
I wotte I muste dye sone:
Bottles is me to make mone,
For dampned I muste be;

My legges rotten and my armes,
That nowe I see of feindes swarmes,
I have done so manye harmes,
From hell cominge after me;
I have done so moche woe,
And never good seith I mighte goe,
Therfore I see cominge my foe,
To feche me to hell.
I bequeath heare in this place
My soule to be with Sathanas.
I dye nowe, alas! alas!
I maie no longer dwell.

Tunc faciet signum quasi morientis, et veniet demon.

DEMON.

Ware, warre! for nowe unwarlye walkes you woe,
For I am swifter then was the roe,
I am comen to feche this lorde you froe,
In wo ever more to dwell;
And with this crocket camrocke your backes I shall cloe,
And all farse belevers I borne and bloe,
That from the crowne of the head to the to
I leve no righte wholl fell.
From Lucifier, that lorde, heither I am sente,
To feche this kinges sowle here presente,
Into hell to bringe hym their to be lente,
Ever to live in woe.
T[h]eire fier burnes bloe and brente,
In their shalbe this lorde veramente,
His plase ever more therin is hente,
His bodye never to goe fro.—
No more shall you treaspase, by my lewtie,
That filles your measueres falslye,
Shall beare this lorde companye,
The gette no other grace;
I will you bringe this into wo,

And come againe and feche moe,
As faste as I maie goe,
Fare well, and have good daye. Exit demon.

ANGELLUS.

Josephe, arise, and that in hie,
For dead is nowe your enemye,
Take Jesu the childe and eke Marye,
And goe into Judye.
Herode, that woulde have hade you slayne,
He is marred bouth mighte and mayne,
Therfore hie you whom againe,
In peace nowe you shalbe.

JOSEPHE.

A ! Lorde, that madeste all of naughte,
It is skill thy wil be wroughte,
Nowe is he dead that us hath soughte,
We shall never cease,
Tell that we be againe
At whom in our cuntrye.
Nowe hope we well to live in lee,
And in full greate peace.
Marye, sister, we muste goe
To our lande that we came froe,
The angell hath beden us soe,
My owine deare sweete ;
One my asse thou shalt be,
And my mantle under thee
Full easelye, sister, leve thou me,
And that I thee behette.

MARIA.

I thanke you, sir, as I can :
Helpe me that I were upon.

He that is bouth God and man,
Kepe us in this tyde!

JOSEPHE.

Come heither, deere harte roote,
I shall sone be thy boote,
Thou shalt ryde iche foote,
And I will goe by thy syde.

ANGELLUS.

Nowe ye be readie for to goe,
Josephe and Marye also,
For south I will not departe you frooe,
But helpe you from youer foe?
And I will make a melodie,
And singe here in your companye,
A worde was sayde in prophescye
A thousande yeaires agoe.

Ex Egipto vocavi filium meum, ut salvum faciet populum meum.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me Georgi Bellin.
Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye. 1592.

XI. THE PURIFICATION.

The Blackesmythes Playe.

Pagina undecima de purificatione beate Virginis; et dicat Semeon.

SEMION.

Myghtye God, have mynde of me,
That moste arte in magistie,
For manye winter have I be
Preiste in Jerusalem;
Moche teene and incommoditie
Foloweth age, full well I see,
And nowe that fitte maie I not fleye,
Thinke me never so swene.
When I am dead and layde in claye,
Wende I muste the same waie
That Abraham wente, the south to saie,
And in his bosome be,
But heaven blesse after my daie,
Tell Godes sonne come, the south to saye,
To ransome his folke in better araye,
To blesse come never we.
That Christe shall come, well I wotte:
But daie nor tyme maye no man wotte,
Therfore my bokes loke I mote,
My harte to glade and lighte;
What Esaii sayth I will see,
For well I wote howe it shalbe,
And I were deade, well were me
Of hym to have a sighte.

Tunc respiciens librum, legat prophetiam, Concipiet et pariet filium, ex te virgo.

A! Lorde, moche is thy power!
A wounder fynde I wrytten here,
It sayth a meden faier and cleare
Shall conseave and beare
A sonne called Emanuell,
But of this leeve I never a deale,
It is wronge wrytten, as I have heale,
Or elles wounder were.
He that wrote this was a fone,
To wryte a virgine here upon,
That shoulde conseave without helpe of man,
This wryttinge marvailes me;
I will skrape this awaie anon,
Their as a virgine is wrytten on,
I will wryte, a good woman,
For so it shoulde be.

ANNA VIDUA.

Semion, father, south I see,
That Christe shall come our boote to be,
From the father in magistie,
On mankinde for to myne;
And when he cometh, leve thou me,
He will have mercye and pittie,
On his folke to make them free,
And save them of their synne.

SEMION.

The tyme of his cominge knowe I naughte;
Yet manye bokes have I soughte,
But wounderlye he that this wryttinge wroughte,
And marvaile thinketh me:
My boke to loke yf I fynde oughte,

What manner mankinde shalbe boughte,
And what tyme it shalbe.

Tunc accipiet librum, et admirando dicat:

O Lorde, howe maie this be to daie,
That I wrote laste I fynde awaie,
And of redde letters in stowte araye
A virgine wrytten theron!
Nay, hereafter I will assaie
Wheither this mirackle be vereye,
And scrape this worde written so gaye,
And wrytte, a good woman.

Tunc iterum fabricat ut antea, et dicat:

Dame Anne, thou maie see well heare,
This is amended in good manere,
For a wounder thinge it were
To fall by anye waie;
Therfore, as it was amisse,
I have written that souther is,
That a good woman shall, i-wisse,
Conseave, and not a maye.

Tunc ponit librum super altare, et faciet angelus ut antea; dicat

ANNA.

Sir, marvile you nothinge theiron,
For God will take kinde in man,
Through his godheade ordayne he can
A mayde a childe to beare;
For to that highe comlye kinge
Impossible is no thinge,
Therfore I leeve it no leasinge,
But south all that is here.

Semion accipit librum.

By my faye, yet will I see,
Wheither my letters chaunged be.—
A ! hie God in Trenitie,
Honoured be thou ever ;
For goulden letters, by my lewtie,
Are wrytten through Godes postie,
Since I layde my boke from me,
And my wryttinge awaie,
Ther as, a good woman, written was,
Righte here nowe before my face,
Yet storred I not out of this place,
And my letters chaunged ys.
This must nedes be by Godes grace,
For an angell this wrytten hase,
Nowe leeve I a mayden, in this case,
Shall beare a baron of blisse.
Nowe seith, Lorde, that it so is,
Thou wilte be borne with blisse,
Of a mayden that never did amisse,
On me, Lorde, thou have mynde ;
Let me never death taste, Lorde full of grace,
Tell I have seene that childes face,
That prophescied is here in this plase
To ever all mankinde.

ANGELLUS.

Semeon, I tell thee sickerlye,
That Godes owne ghoste am I,
Comen to warne thee witterlye,
Death shalte thou never see,
Tell thou have seene Christe vereye,
That borne is of mayden Marye,
And comen mankinde to for-bye,
From God in magistie.

SEMION.

A ! Lorde, I thanke thee of thy grace,
That thy ghoste sente to me haste !
Nowe hope I sickerlie in this place
Thy sonne for to see,
That of a virgine muste be borne,
To save mankinde that was for-lorne,
As Esaues boke toulde me beforne.
Lorde, blessed muste thou be !

MARIA.

Josephe, my trewe owine fere,
Nowe rede I, if your will were,
Seith fourtie daies are gone intier,
The temple that we goe to ;
And Moyses lawe for to fulfill,
My sonne to offer Semion till :
I wote well that it is Godes will
That we mone so doe.

JOSEPHE.

Yea, Marye, though it be no nede,
Seith thou arte cleane in thoughte and deed,
Yet it is good to do as God bade,
And worcke after his lawe ;
And to the temple that we gone,
And take we with us dove byrdes towe,
Or a turckell to offer also,
And so fulfill Godes lawe.

MARIA.

Rightewise Semeon, God thee see !
Here am I comen nowe to thee,
Purified for to be,
With milde harte and meke ;

Receive my sonne nowe at me,
And to my offeringe birdes three,
As falles, sire, for your degree,
And for your office eke.

JOSEPHE.

A signe I offer here also,
Of virgine wax, as other moe,
In tockeninge shee has lived thoe
In full devocion;
And, sir Semion, leve well this,
As cleane as this waxe nowe is,
As cleane is my wife, i-wisse,
As of all corruptcion.

SEMEON.

Welckome, my Christe, my Savyour,
Welkome, mankindes conqueroure,
Welkome of all frute the flower,
Welkome with all my harte!
To thee worshipe, joye, and honoure!
For nowe I see my Savyour
Is comen to see my langoure,
And bringe me into blesse.
Though I beare thee nowe, sweete wighte,
Thou ruleste me, as it is righte;
For, through thee I have mayne and mighte
More then through waie of kinde;
Therfore a songe as I have tighte,
And laudes to thee with harte righte,
I will shewe here in thy sighte,
On me, Lorde, thou have mynde.

Tunc cantabit, Nunc dimittis servum tuum, domine, etc.

Nowe let thy servante be

After thy worde in peace and lee,
For with my eyes nowe I see
Thou arte mankindes heale;
For thou haste ordeyned ther thy postie,
To people which thou haste pittie
Lighteninge is comen nowe through thee,
And joye to Isarell.
And Marye, mother, to thee I saie,
Thy sonne that I have seene to daie,
Is comen, I tell thee in good faye,
For fallinge of manye a fone;
And to releave in good araye
Manye a man, as he well maie,
In Isarell, or he wende awaie,
That shall leeve hym upon.
Manye signes he shall shewe,
In which untrewe shall not trowe,
And suffer thou shalte manye a harde thrawe,
For soe of sorowe it shall goe;
Through my harte then men shall knowe
Thoughtes in harte on a rowe,
Of men that shall contrarye you,
And founde to worke thee woo.

ANNA VIDUA.

And I acknowledge to thee, Lorde, heare,
To leeve on thee through my power,
That fower skore and fower yeaire
Haste sente me mighte and grace
To leve in pennance and praier,
Nowe wote I well withouten were,
That thou arte Christe in godheade cleare,
In thee whollye thou haste;
And openlye here south I saye
To all thy people that I see maie,

The which hath wayled manye a daie
After thee, our Savyoure;
That thou arte comen Christe vereye,
This wotte I well by manye a waie,
Therfore I honoure thee for aye,
My Christe, my Creator.

MARIA.

Josephe, husbande leffe and deare,
Our childe is gone upon his waie,
My harte were lighte and he were,
Let us goe seeke hym we thee praie,
For sodenlye he wente awaie,
And lefte us bouth in Jerusalem,
Greatlye in likinge manye a daie,
That wilbe Lorde over all the realme.
Marrye, of myrthes we maie us meane,
And trewlye tell betwene us towe
Of fearlye sightes that we have seene,
Seith we came the cittie froe.
Dere Josephe, will you wende?
Seith our childe hath bene us with,
Whom-warde I rede we hie,
He kepe us bouth from growne and greiffe,
In all the mighte that ever I maie,
For dreade of wicked companye,
Leaste anye us meete upon the waie;
Whom-warde theirfore I rede we hie.

PRIMUZ DOCCTER.

Heare our reason righte on a rowe,
You clarkes that be of greate cuninge,
Me thinkes this childe woulde learne our lawe,
He taketh greate heede to our talkinge.

DEUS.

You clarkes that be of greate cuninge,
Unto my talkinge you take good heede,
My father that sitteth in magistie,
He knowes your thoughtes in worde and deed;
My father and I togeither be
In on godhead, withouten dreade,
We be bouth on in certentie,
All thes workes to rule and reade.

PRIMUS DOCCTER.

Heare this childe in his bourdinge,
He weenes he kennes more then he knowes.
Certes, sonne, thou arte over yonge
By cleargye cleaine to knowe our lawes;
Therfore yf thou wouldeste never so fayne,
Futher in age then thou have drawe,
Yet arte thou never of mighte nor mayne
To knowe as a clarke shoulde knowe.

SECUNDUS DOCCTER.

And thou wylte speake of Moyses lawe,
Take good heede and thou maye se,
In case be that thou maye knowe,
Heare in this booke that wrytten be.

DEUS.

The kingdome of heaven is in me lighte,
And hath me anoynted like a leche,
And geven me plaine power and mighte
The kingdome of heaven to tell and teache.

SECUNDUS DOCTER.

Behoulde howe he hase learned our lawes,
And he learned never on boke to reade:

Me thinkes he saies suttill sawes,
And vereye truth, yf you take heede.

TERCIUS DOCCTER.

Let hym wende fourth on his wayes,
For and he dwell, withouten dreade,
The people will sone hym praise,
Well more then us for all our deedes.

PRIMUZ DOCCTER.

This is nothinge to my intente,
Suche speache to spende I rede we spare,
And welde in worlde as I have mente,
Yet founde I never so vereye a fare.

SECUNDUS DOCCTER.

By matters that this childe hath mente,
To knowe our lawes lesse and more,
Out of heaven I hope hym sente
Into the yeairth to salve our sore.

DEUS.

You that be maysters of Moyses lawe,
And worthy doccters of greate degree,
On commaundmente to me you shewe
That God on yeairth bade kepte shoulde be.

PRIMUZ DOCCTER.

I reade this is the firste byddinge,
And is the moste in Moyses lawe,
To love our God above all thinge,
With all our mighte and all our lawe.

DEUS.

That for to doe loke you be bayne,

With all your harte with good intente,
Take you not his name in vaine,
This is my fathers comaundmente.
Also you honor your holye daie,
No worckes save almes deedes you doe.
These three, the certen for to saie,
The firste table belonge unto.
Also, father and mother worshipe aye;
Take no mans goodes againste the righte;
Also all false wittnes you put awaie;
And slea no man by daie nor nighte;
Envye doe by no woman,
To doe her shame by nighte nor daie;
Other mens wyffes desier you note,
All suche desiers you put awaie;
Loke you doe not steale nighte nor daie,
What so ever to you be lente;
Thes wordes understande you maye,
The are my fathers commaundmente.

TERCIUS DOCCTER.

Sires, this childe of mickell prise,
Which is yonge and tender of age,
I houlde hym from the highe justice,
To wyne againe our heritage.

MARIA.

Nowe blessed be he that us heither broughte,
In lande lives non so lighte,
Se wher he sittes which we have soughte,
Amonge yender masters mickell of mighte.
Goe fourth, Joseph, on your waie,
And fatche our sonne, and let us fare,
That sitteth with yender doccters gaye,
For we have hade of hym greate care.

JOSEPHE.

Marye, wife, thou wotteste righte well,
That I muste all my travile teene,
With men of mighte I can not melle,
That sitteth so gaye in furres fyne.

MARIA.

My worthy sonne to me so deare,
Wee have thee soughte wounder wyde,
I am righte gladde that thou arte heare,
That we have found thee in this tyde.

DEUS.

Mother, full ofte I toulde you till,
My fathers worckes for waile or wo
Heither was I sente for to fulfill,
That muste I nedes doe or I goe.

MARIA.

Thy sayinge, sonne, as have I heale,
I can nothinge understande,
I shall thinke on them full well,
And founde to doe that you commaunde.

ANGELLUS.

Nowe have you harde all in this place,
That Christe is comon through his grace,
As hollye Esau prophescied hase,
And Semion hath hym sende;
Leve you well this lordes of mighte,
And kepe you all his lawes arighte,
That you maye in his blisse so brighte
Ever more with hym live.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me Georgi Bellin.

Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye. 1592.

XII. THE TEMPTATION, AND THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.

The Bowchers Playe.

Incipit pagina duodecima, qualiter Jesus ductus est in desertum asperum; incipiat Diabolus.

DIABOLUS.

Nowe by [my] soverante I sweare,
And principallitie that I beare
In hell pyne, when I am their,
A gamon I will assaie;
Ther is a dossiberde I woulde dere,
That walkes abrode wilde were,
Whoe is his father I wotte nere,
The south yf I shoulde saye.
What master mon ever be this,
That nowe into the worlde comen is,
His mother I wotte did never amisse,
And that nowe marvailes me.
This can not I fynde i-wysse,
For all my crafte and my countise,
Yt seemes that heaven shoulde al be his,
So stowte a sire is he.
He is man from foote to crowne,
And gotten without corruptcion,
So cleane of conversacion
Knewe I never non before.
All men of hym marvile mon,

For as man he goeth up and downe,
But as God with devocion
His hasse hym honer yore.
Since the worlde firste beganne,
Knewe I never such a man,
Borne of a deadlike woman,
And howe it wembles.
Amonge synfull syn dose he non,
And cleaneer then ever was any one,
Blottles of blude and bone,
And wiser then ever man was.
Averice nor anye envye
In hym coulde I never espie,
He hath no goulde in treasurye,
Ner tempted is by no sighte.
Pryde hath he non nor glotanye,
Ne nor no likinge of lecherye;
His mouth harde I never lye,
Nether by daye nor nighte.
My highnes he puttes ever behynde,
For in hym faulte cane I non fynde.
Yf he be God in mans kinde,
My crafte then fullye fayleth.
And more than man I wotte he is,
Elles some thinge he did amisse,
Save onlye hongarye he is, i-wisse,
Elles wotte I not what hym ayles.
And this thinge dare I southlye saye.
Yf that he be God vereye,
Honger shall greve hym by no waie,
That were againste reason.
Therfore nowe I woulde assaie
With speache of bread hym to betraye;
For he hasse fasted nowe manye a daie,
Therfore bredde were in season.

DIABOLUS DICIT.

Thou man, abyde and speake with me:
Godes sonne and yf thou be,
Make of these stonnes, nowe lettes see,
Breade, through thy blessinge.

DEUS.

Sathan, I tell thee sickerlye,
Bread man liveth not onlye by,
But through Godes worde verelye,
Of his mouth cominge.
Therfore thou pynes thee, Sathan[as],
To supplante me of my place
By meate, as somtyme Addam was,
Of blesse when he was broughte.
Deceived he was that tyme through thee,
But nowe muste faile thy postie;
Therfore to move that thinge to me,
It shall serve thee of naughte.
Sathan, through thy intisemente,
Honger shall naughte torne my intente;
For Godes will omnipotente
Is my meate, boute fayle,
And his worde perfecte sustenance,
And to me also without distance;
For thou shall fynde no variance
In me, that shall thee avayle.

DIABOLUS.

Out, alas! what is this?
This matter fares all amisse!
Hongarye I se well he is,
As man shoulde kindlye be;
But through no crafte nor no countise,
I cane not torne his will, i-wisse,

That neede of anye bodelye blesse
In hym no thinge has he.
For he maie suffer all maner anoye,
As man shoulde well and steadfastlye,
But ever he wyneith the victorye,
As godheade in hym were.
Some other sleighte I muste espye,
This doscibeirde for to destroye,
For of me he hath the maisterye
Unhappelye nowe heare.
Adam, that God hym selfe wroughte,
Through my deceate in balle I broughte;
But this sir, that I have soughte,
Borne of one woman,
For no nede that hym selfe hase,
With no counscell in this case,
To greve hym I maie have no grace,
For no crafte that I can.
Yett will I seache some suttiltie.—
Come fourth thou, Jesus, come with me,
To this hollye cittie;
I have an errand to saie.
Vereye God, and if thou be,
Now I shall full sone see;
For I shall shape honour for thee,
Or that thou wende awaie.

Tunc statuet Jesu super pinnaculum templi, et dicat

DIABOLUS.

Saye, thou that siteth nowe so highe,
Yf thou be Godes sonne, by sleighte,
Come downe, and I will see in sighte
That thou dideste a fayer maisterye;
Thy owine angelles mone kepe to thee,
That thou hurte no foote nor kneye,

Shewe thy power, nowe lettes see.
That thou maie have maisterye their-by.

Jesus dicit ad Diabolus. (sic)

Sathan, sickerlye I thee saie,
It is wrytten that thou ney maie
Tempte God thy Lorde by no waie,
What matter so ever be mente.

Descendens de pinnaculo dicat Diabolus.

Alas! that me is wo to daie!
This have I fayled of my praye!
Was I never rente in such araye,
Ner halfe so fowle deprived.

Tunc Sathan adducet Jesus super montem, et dicat:

DIABOLUS.

Yet, felowe, if it be thy will,
Goe we plaie us to a hill,
Another poynte I muste fulfill,
For oughte that maie befall;
Loke aboute thee nowe and see
Of all this realme the royaltie:
For, to kneele downe and worshipe me,
Thou shalte be lorde of all.

DEUS.

Goe fourth, Sathanas, goe fourth, goe!
It was wrytten it shalbe so,
Thy Lorde God thou shalt honer,
And serve hym through thyn eye.

DIABOLUS.

Out, alas! that me is woe!
For founde I never so greate a foe,

Though I to the people were never so thro,
I am overcome thrise.
Alas! my sleighte nowe am I quitte:
Adam I founded with a fitte,
And hym in cumberances sone I knitte,
Through countise of my crafte.
Nowe, sone of sorowe he mone be sutte,
And I punished in hell pitte:
Knewe I never non of suche witte,
As he that I have laste.
Alas! for shame I am shente,
With hell houndes when I am hente,
I muste be ragged and all to-rente,
And dreven to the fier;
And in sorowe and wo nowe am I broughte,
And all my cuninge is sette at naughte:
Endles paine muste I have unsoughte,
To my rewarde and hier.
But I am nowe of good intente,
To houlde a courte full dilligente,
And call my servantes, veramente,
Shortlye for to apeare;
Them to rewarde with dignitie,
That all ther life have served me,
In borninge blesse their shall the be,
And sitte with Lucifier.

DOCCTER.

Loe, lordinges, Godes rightiousnes,
As Gregorye maketh mynde exspres,
Synce our forfather overcomen was,
By three thinges to doe evill;
Glotanye, vaine glorye, their be towe,
Covetouse of highnes also,
By thes three poyntes, boute moe,

Christe hase overcomen the devill.
That Adam was tempted in glorye
I maye well prove appeartlye,
When of that frute falsclye
The devill made hym to eate;
And tempted he was in vayne glorye
When he heighte hym greate magistie,
And have godhead unworthelye,
Through eatinge of that meate.
Also he was tempted in averice,
When he heighte hym to be wise,
Knowe good and evill at his devise,
More then he was worthy.
For covetousnes Gregeorye saith expresse,
Synnes naughte onlye in riches,
But in willinge of highenes
And state unskillfullye.
Also Christe in thes signes three
Was tempted, as ye maie well see,
For in glotanye, leve you me.
He moved hym yea sleilye here,
When he intisced hym through his read,
To torne the stones into breade,
And so to move his godheade,
Which he was in a were.
In vayne glorye he tempted hym also,
When he bade hym downe to goe
The pynackle of the temple froe,
An unskillfull gate;
And in covetousnes he tempted was,
When he shewed hym suche riches,
And heighte hym landes more and lesse,
And that through greate estate.
This overcome thrise in this case
The devill, as played was in this place,

Of the three synnes that Adam was
Of wayle into woe wayved;
But Adam fell through his treaspas,
And Jesu withstood hym through his grace,
For of his godhead southnes
That tyme was cleane deceived.

Tunc veniet Domino Pharasei adducentes mulierem in adulterio deprehensam, dicat primuz Phareseus:

Maysters, I rede by God allmighte,
That we leade this wreched wighte,
That was tacken thus to nighte
In fowle advoultrye,
Before Jesu in his sighte,
For to tempte hym I have tighte,
To se wheither he will deme the righte,
Or els unlawfullye.

SECUNDUS PHARASEUS.

That is well rede, felowe, by my faye!
Soe maye we cache hym by some waye,
For if he doe her grace to daie,
He dose against the lawe;
And yf he byde punishe her sore,
He dose againste his owine lore,
That he hase preached here before,
To mercye man shoulde drawe.

Tunc adducent mulierem inter se coram Jesu, et dicat

PRIMUZ PHARASEUS.

Master, this woman that is heare
Was wedded lawfullye this other yeaire,
But with another then her feare
We founde her doe amisse.
And Moyses lawe bydes us stone

All suche as be uncleane:
Therfore to thee we can us meane,
To geve a dome of this.

Jesus scribens in terra, dicat

JESUS.

Nowe which of you everye ichone
Is bout synne, buske hym anon,
And caste at her the firste stone,
Belive, or that ye blyne.

PRIMUZ PHARASEUS.

Speake on, master, and somewhat saie,
Shall shee be stoned, or elles neye?
Or doe her mercye as thou maie,
To forgeve her this synne.

SECUNDUS PHARASEUS.

Maister, why arte thou so still?
What wrytteste thou? yf it be thy will,
Wheither shall we spare or spill
This woman founde in blame?
What wrytteste thou, master? nowe lettes see:—
Out, alas! that woes me!
For no longer dare I here be,
For dreade of worldye shame.

Et fugiet, et dicat postea Primuz Pharaseus:

Why fleyeste thou, fellowe, by thy faye?
I will se sone and assaye.
Alas! that I were awaie
Ferre behynde France!
Stand ye, Sible, hym besyde;
No longer here dare I abyde

Againste thee for to chyde,
As have I good chaunce!

Et fugiet, et dicat Jesus ad mulierem:

Woman, wher be thes men eicheone,
That putten this gilte thee uppon?
To dampne thee nowe their is non
Of thoes that were before.

MULIER ADULTERA.

Lorde, to dampne me their is non,
For all the bene awaie gone.

JESUS.

Nowe I dampne thee not, woman:
Goe fourth, and synne no more.

MULIER.

A! Lorde, blessed muste thou be,
That of mischeiffe hasse holpen me;
Hensefourth nowe I will fleye,
And serve thee in good faye;
For godheade full in thee I see,
That knowes worckes that done we,
I honoure thee kneelinge on my knye,
And so will I doe [aye].

DOCCTER.

Nowe, lordes, I praye you marcke here
The great goodnes of Godes deere,
I will declare, as it is need,
These thinges that plaied was,
As Austyne speaketh expresslie
Of it in his homilye
Upon Saynte John Evangelye,

This he sayes in that case:
Towe wayes the casten hym to anoye,
Synce he hade preached moch of mercye,
And the lawe comaunded expresslye
Suche wemen for to stone.
That treasspassen in advoultrye;
Therfore the hopen witterlye
Varyence in hym to espie,
Or blemyshe the lawe cleane.
That wiste Jesu well their thoughte,
And all their wittes he sette at naughte;
But bade which synne hade not wroughte
Caste firste at her a stone,
And wrote in claye, leeve you me,
Ther owine synnes that the maie se,
That eichone fayne was to fleye,
And the lefte her aloone.
For eichon of them hade grace
To see ther synnes in that place,
Yet non of them wiser was,
But his synnes eich man knewe;
And fayne the were to take the waie,
Leste the hade dampned bene that daie.
This helped that woman, in good faye,
Our sweete Lorde Jesu.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me, Georgi Bellin.
Come, Lorde Jesu, come quicklye. 1592.

XIII. LAZARUS.

The Glovers playe.

Pagina decima tertia de chelidonis et de resurrectione Lazari.

JESUS.

Ego sum lux mundi, qui sequitur me non ambulabit in tenebris sed habebit lumen vite.

JESUS.

Brethren, I am *filius Dei*, the lighte of this worlde;
He that followeth me walketh not in darcknes,
But hath the lighte of life, the Scriptures so recorde,
As patrickes and prophettes of me beare wittnes,
Bouth Abraham, Isacke, and Jacobe, in their sundrye testimonies,
Unto whom I was promysed before the worlde beganne,
To paie ther ranscome, and to become man.

Ego et Pater unum sumuz, my father and I are all one,
Which hath me sente from his throne sempiternall,
To preache and declare his will unto man.
Because he loveth hym above his creatures all,
As his treasure and darlinge moste principalle.
Man, I saye againe, which is his owne eleckte,
Above all creatures seculierlye seleckte.

Wherfore, deare brethren, yt is my mynde and will
To goe to Bethenye, that standeth here by,
My fathers hestes and comaundmentes to fulfill;

For I am the good sheapard that putteth his life in joperdye
To save his flocke, which I love tenderlye,
As it is wrytten of me, the Scriptures beareth wittnes,
Bonus pastor ponit animam suam pro ovibus suis.

Goe we therfore, brethren, while the daie is lighte,
To do my fathers worckes, as I am fullye mynded,
To heale the sicke, and restore the blinde to sighte,
That the prophesye of me mighte be fulfilled:
For other sheepe I have, which are to me committed,
The be not of this flocke, yet will I them regarde,
That ther maie be on flocke and one sheaparde.

But or we goe hense, wryte thes sayinges in your harte,
Recorde them ofte, kepe them in memorie,
Contynue in my worde, from it do not departe;
Therby shall all men knowe moste perfectlye,
That you are my desciples, and of my familie.
Goe not before me, but let my worde be your guyde;
Then in your doinges you shall alwaies well speed.

Si vos manseritis in sermone meo, veri discipuli mei eritis, et cognoscetis veritatem, et veritas liberabit vos.

Puer ducens cecum.

Yf pittie maye move your gentle hartes,
Remember, good people, the poore and the blynde,
With your charatable almes the poore man to comforte,
He is your owine neightboure and of your owine kinde.

CECUS.

Your almes, good people, for charitye,
To me that am blynd and never did see,
Your neightboure borne in this cittie:
Helpe me, or I goe hence.

PETRUS.

Master, instrockte us in this case,
Why this man borne blinde was:
Is it for his owine treaspas?
Or elles for his parentes?

JOHN.

Was synne the cause originall
Wherin we be decived all,
That this blynd man was broughte in thralle?

JESUS.

Hit was nether for his offence,
Nether the synne of his parentes,
Or other faulte or necligence,
That he was blinde borne;
But for this cause speciallye,
To sette fourth Godes greate glorye,
His power to shewe manifestlye
This manes sighte to reforme.
While the daie is fayer and brighte,
My fathers workes I muste worcke righte,
Untill the cominge of the nighte,
That lighte be gone awaie.
In this worlde, when I am heare,
I am the lighte that shyneth cleare,
My lighte to them shall well appeare
Which cleeve to me allwaie.

Tunc Jesus super terram spuit et lutum faciet, et oculos ceci manibus fricabit, et postea dicat

JESUS.

Doe, man, as I saye to thee,
Goe to the watter of Syloe,
Ther wayshe thy eyes, and thou shall see,
And geve to God the prayse.

Tunc cecus querit aquam, et abiit Jesus.

CECUS.

Leade me, good childe, right hastelye
Unto the watter of Siloe.

Tunc lavat, et postea dicat:

Praysed be God omnipotente,
Which nowe to me my sighte has sente!
I see all thinges nowe heare presente,
Blessed be God allwaie!
When I hade done as God me bade,
My perfecte sighte fourthwith I hade;
Wherfore my harte is wounder glade,
That I doute where I am.

PRIMUZ PHARASEUS.

Neightboures, yf I the truth shoulde saie,
This is the blynde man which yster daie
Asked our almes, as we came this waie:
It is the vereye same.

SECUNDUS PHARASEUS.

No, no, neightboures, yt is not he,
But it is the likeste to hym that ever I see;
One man to another like maye be,
And so is he to hym.

CECUS.

Good men, trulye I am he
That was blynde and nowe I see,
I am no other vereleye;
Enquier of all my kynne.

PRIMUZ PHARASEUS.

Then tell the truth, we thee praye,
Howe this is happned to us saye,

Thou that even yster daye
Couldeste see noe yeairthlye thinge,
And nowe seiste so perfectlye;
Noe wante of sighte in thee we see.
Declare therfore to us trulye,
Without more reasoninge.

CECUS.

The man whiche we calle Jesus,
That worcketh miracles daylie with us,
And whom we fynde so gracious,
Anoynted my eyes with claye,
And to the watter of Siloe
He bade me goe immeadiatlye,
And wayshe my eyes and I shoulde see;
And theider I toke my waye.
When the watter on my eyes lighte,
Immediatlye I hade my sighte;
Was their never earthlye wighte
So joyfull in his thoughte.

SECUNDUS VICINUS.

Wher is he nowe, we thee praie?

CECUS.

I knowe not wher he is, by this daie.

SECUNDUS VICINUS.

Thou shalte with us come one this waie,
And to the Pharasittes thes wordes saie;
But yf thou woulde thes wordes deneye,
It shall helpe thee righte naughte.—
Loke up, lordinges and judges, arighte,
We have broughte you a man that hade no sighte,
And on the Saboth daye, through on mans mighte,
Was healed and restored, for south.

PRIMUS VICINUS.

Declare to them, thou wiccked wighte,
Who did restore to thee thy sighte,
That we maye knowe anon righte
Of this matter the truth.

CECUS.

Jesus anoynted my eyes with claye,
And byde me wayshe in Siloe;
And before I came awaie,
My perfecte sighte I hade.

PRIMUS PHARASEUS.

This man, the truth yf I shoulde saye,
Is not of God, my heade I laye!
Which doth voyolate the Saboath daye,
I judge hym to be madde.

SECUNDUS PHARASEUS.

It cannot enter into my thoughte,
That he which hath this marvayle wroughte
Should be a synner, I leeve it naughte,
It is not in my creede.
Saye, what is he that did thee heale?

CECUS.

A prophette he is, without fayle.

PRIMUS PHARASEUS.

Suerlye, thou arte a knave by kinde,
And fayneste thy selfe for to be blinde!
Wherfore nowe this is my mynde
The truth to trye indeede;
His father and mother both in feare
Shall come declare the matter heare,

And then the truth shall sone appeare,
And we put out of doute.
Goe fourth, messinger, anon in hye,
And feache his parentes by and by;
This knave can naughte but prate and lye.
I woulde his eyes were out.

MESSINGER.

Your byddinge, mayster, I shall fulfill,
And do my dewtye as is good skill,
For this daye heither I knowe the will,
And I shall spye them out.

Tunc circumspectat, et adloquitor eos.

Sir and dame, bouth in feare,
You muste before the Pharasites appeare,
What ther will is their shall you here:
Have donne and come your waie!

MATER.

Alas! man, what doe we heare?
Muste we before the Pharasittes appeare?
A vengance on them, farre and nere!
The never did poore men good.

PATER.

Dame, their is no other waye,
But their commaundment we muste obaye,
Or elles the woulde, without delaye,
Curse us and take our good.

MESSINGER.

Heare I have broughte, as you bade me,
These towe persons that aged be;

The bene the parentes of hym trulye,
Which sayde that he was blynde.

PRIMUZ PHARASEUS.

Come nere to us bouth towe,
And tell us trewlye or you goe,
Wheither this be your sonne or noe;
Loke noe deceate we fynde.

PATER.

Maisters, we knowe certenlye
Our sonne he is, we cannot denye,
And blynde was borne undowtedlye,
And that we will depose;
But whoe restored hym to his sighte
We be uncerten, by God allmighte!
Wherfore of hym, as it is righte,
The truth you muste inquier.

MATER.

For he hath age his talle to tell,
And his mother tonge to utter it well,
Allthough he coulde never bye nor sell,
Lett hym speake, we desyer.

PRIMUZ PHARASEUS.

Geve prayse to God, thou craftye knave,
And loke hereafter thou doe not rave,
Nor saye that Jesus did thee save,
And restored to thee thy sighte.

SECUNDUS PHARASEUS.

He is a synner, and that we knowe,
Deceavinge the people towe and frooe;

This is moste trewe that we thee showe,
Beleve us, as is righte.

CECUS.

Yf he be synfull I doe not knowe,
But this is truth that I doe showe,
When I was blynde and in greate woe,
He cured me as you see.

PRIMUS PHARASEUS.

What did he, thou leither swayne?

CECUS.

I toulde you onste; will you here it againe?
Or his disciples will you become,
Of all your synnes to have remyssion.

SECUNDUS PHARASEUS.

O cursced caytiffe! yll mote thou thee!
Woulde thou have us his disciples to be?
Noe, no: Moyses disciples bene all we,
For God with hym did speake;
But whense he is we never knewe.

CECUS.

I marvaile of that, as I am trewe,
That you knowe not from whense he shoulde be
That me cured that never did see,
Knowinge this moste certenlye,
God will not synners heare.
But he that honoured God trewlye,
Hym will he here by and by,
And graunte his askinge graciouslye,
For that man is to hym deare.
And to [saye] this I dare be boulde,

Ther is no man that ever coulde
Restore a creature unto his sighte,
That was blynde borne and never sawe lighte;
Yf he of God were not, i-wysse,
He coulde never worcke suche thinges as this.

PRIMUZ PHARASEUS.

What, synfull knave, wylte thou teache us
Which all the Scriptures can diskousse,
And of our livinge be so vertuous?
We curse thee out of this place.

JESUS.

Beleeves thou in Godes sonne trewlye?

CECUS.

Yea, gracious Lorde, who is he?

JESUS.

Thou haste hym seene with thy eyne,
Hee is the same that talketh with thee.

CECUS.

Then heare I honour hym with harte free,
And ever will serve hym untill I dye.

PRIMUZ JUDEUS.

Saye, man, that maketh suche maisterye,
Are thou our soules doe anoye,
Tell us heare apeartlye,
Christe yf that thou be.

JESUS.

That I speake to you openlye,
And worckes that I doe verelye,

In my fathers name allmightye,
Beare wittnes of me.
But you beleeve not as you seene,
For of my sheepe ye neye bene,
But my flocke withouten wene
Heare my voyce allwaye;
And I knowe them well icheone,
For with me allwaye the gone,
And for them I ordayne in my name
Everlastinge life for aye.
No man shall reave my sheepe from me;
For my father in magistie
Is greater than be all ye,
Or anye that ever was.

SECUNDUS JUDEUS.

Theu shalte abye or thou passe!
Helpe, fellowe, and gaither stonnes!
He skornes us quantlye for the nones,
And dothe us greate anoye.

Tunc lapides colligunt.

Yea, stonnes here nowe I have,
For this riball that thus can rave!
On strocke, as God me save,
He shall have sone in hie.

JESUS.

Wreches, manye a good deed
I have done you in your need;
Nowe quitte you fowle my mede,
To stonne me in this manere.

PRIMUZ JUDEUS.

For the good deedes that thou haste wroughte,
At this tyme stonne we thee naughte:

Their thou lyeste fowle and falslye,
Both in worde and thoughte.

JESUS.

But I doe well and trewlye
My fathers bydinge by and by,
Elles maye you hope well I lye,
And then leeve you me naughte.
But seinge you will not leeve me
Nor my deedes that you maye see,
To them beleevinge take ye,
For nothinge maye be souther;
Soe maye you knowe well and vereye,
In my father that I am aye,
And he in me south to saye,
And either of us in other.

Tunc colligent lapides, et statim evanescit Jesus.

SECUNDUS JUDEUS.

Out, owte, alas! wher is our fonne,
Quicklye that he is hense gone?
I woulde a tacken hym, and that anon,
And woulde hym all to-clapped;
Yea, make we never so moche mone,
Nowe here is no other wonne,
For he and his men everye icheone
Are from us clearlye scaped.

PRIMUZ JUDEUS.

Nowe, by the death I shall on dye!
Maye I see hym with my eye,
To sir Cayphas I shall hym wrye,
And tell that shall hym dare.
See I never non, by my faye,
When I hade stonnes, soe sone awaye;

But yet no force, another daye
His taberte we shall feare.

MARIA.

A ! Lorde Jesu ! that me is woe !
To wytte my brother sicklye soe,
In feable tyme Christe yode me froo,
Well were me and he were here.

MARTHA.

Yea, sister, about we will goe,
And seeke Jesus towe and froe ;
To helpe hym he wilbe throe,
And he wiste howe it were.

Tunc venit Jesus.

O my Lorde, sweete Jesus, mercye !
Lazarre, that thou loved tenderlye,
Lyeth sicke a littill here by,
And suffereth moche teene.

JESUS.

Yea, woman, I tell thee witterlye,
That sicknes is not deadlye,
But Godes sonne to glorifie,
By hym as maye be seene.

Tunc ibit Martha ad Mariam.

MARIA.

A ! Martha, sister, alas ! alas !
My brother is dead since thou here was ;
Had Jesus my Lorde bene in this place,
This case hade not bene fallne.

MARTHA.

Yea, sister, nere is Godes grace,
Manye a man he holpen hase,
Yeat maye he doe for us in this case,
And hym to liffe calle.

MARIA.

Here will I sitte and mourninge make,
Tell that Jesus my sorowe slake.
My teene to harte, Lorde, thou take,
And ease me of my wooe.

MARTHA.

In sorowe and woe here will I wake,
And lament for Lazarre my brothers sake:
Though I for payne and coulde quake,
Hense will I not goe.

Tunc pariter juxta sepulcrum sedebunt plorantes, et Jesus:

JESUS.

Brethren, goe we to Judye.

PETRUS.

Maister, righte well thou maye see
The Jewes woulde have stoned thee,
And yett thou will againe.

JESUS.

Wote you not well this is vereye,
That xij. oures are in the daye;
And whoe so walketh that tyme his waie
Treasspaseth not, the south to saie:
He offendeth not that goeth in lighte,
But whoe so ever walketh in nighte,

He trespassed all againste the righte,
And lighte in hym is non.
Why I saye this that I have toulde,
I shall tell you sone in highte,
Have mynde of it through your mighte,
And thinke theirupon:
To the daye my selfe lickned maie be,
To the xij. oures all ye,
That lightned bene through followinge me,
That am moste likinge lighte;
For worldes lighte I am vereye,
And who so foloweth me, south to saie,
He maie goe no thester waie,
For lighte in hym is dighte.

Oportet me operari opera ejus qui misit me, donec dies est; venit nox, quando nemo potest operari: quamdiu sum in mundo, lux sum mundi.

JESUS.

Brethren, I tell you tydinges:
Lazarre, my frende, is sleapinge.
Theidder we muste be goinge,
Upon hym for to calle.

JOHN.

Lorde, if he slepe, saffe he maie be,
For in his slepe noe perill is he;
Therfore it is not good for thee
To goe theider for so smalle.

JESUS.

I tell you, brethren, certenlye
Lazarre is dead, and theider will I:
Fayne I am you wotte not, I

Was not their, as you maie see:
We goe theider anon in hie.

THOMAS.

Folowe hym, brethren, to his anoye,
And I with hym devoutlye,
For non other it will not be.

Tunc versus locum ibit Jesus, ubi Maria et Martha sedent, et Martha fiet obviam.

MARTHA.

A! Lorde Jesus, hadest thou bene here leade,
Lazarre my brother hade not bene dead.
Fut well I wotte thou will us reade,
Nowe thou arte with us heare.
And this I leeve and hope arighte,
What thinge thou asketh of God allmighte,
He will graunte it thee in heighte,
And graunte thee thy prayer.

JESUS.

Thy brother, Martha, shall rise, I saye.

MARTHA.

That leeve I, Lorde, in good faye,
That he shall rise the laste daie;
Then hope I hym to see.

JESUS.

Martha, I tell thee without naye,
I am risinge and life vereye,
Which life shall laste for aye,
And never shall endid be.
Whoesoever leevith steadfastlie
In me, I tell thee trulye,

Though he dead be and downe lye,
Shall live and fare well.
Leeves thou, woman, that this may be?

MARTHA.

Lorde, I leeve and leeve mon,
That thou arte Christe, Godes sonne,
Is comen into this worlde to wonne,
Mans boote for to be:
This have I leeved steadfastlye;
Therfore on me thou have mercye,
And one my sister eke Marye,
I will feche her to thee.

Tunc Martha ibit et vocabit Mariam, dicens:

MARTHA.

A! leffe Marye, sister deare,
Hye thee quicklye and come nere;
My sweete Lorde Jesus he is heare,
And calleth thee hym towe.

MARIA.

A! well were we and it so were!
But hade my lovelye Lorde of lere
Seene my brother lyne on beere,
Some helpe mighte a bene done.
But nowe he stincketh, south to saye,
For nowe this is the fourth daye,
Synce he was buryed in the claye,
That was to me soe leffe;
But yett, my Lorde, I will assaye,
And with all my harte hym I praie,
To comforte us, and that he maie,
And mende all our mischeiffe.

Tunc Maria videns Jesum prosternat se ad pedes, dicens:

A ! Lorde Jesus, hadeste thou bene here,
Lazarre my brother, thy owine dere,
Had not bene dead in this manere.
Moche sorowe is me upon !

JESUS.

Wher have you done hym, tell to me.

MARIA.

Lorde, come heither, and thou maye se,
For buryed in this place is he,
Fower dayes nowe agone.

Tunc venient Judei, quorum dicat primus Judeus:

See, ffellowe, for cokes soule !
This frecke begines to reme and yole,
That makes greate dole for gole,
That he loved wel before.

SECUNDUS JUDEUS.

Yf he had cuninge, me thinke he mighte
From death have saved Lazarre by righte,
As well as sende that man his sighte,
That whiche so blynde was borne.

JESUS.

Have done, and put awaye the stone.

MARTHA.

A ! Lorde, fower dayes bene gone,
Since he was buryed blood and bone ;
He stinckes, Lorde, in good faye.

JESUS.

Martha, sayde I not to thee,
Yf that thou leeved fullye in me,
Godes grace sone shalte thou see?
Therfore doe as I thee saye.

Tunc deponent lapidem de sepulcro, et Jesus tergum vertens manibus elevat, et dicat Jesus:

Father of heaven, I thanke thee,
That so sone hath harde me,
Well I wiste and southlye see
Thou hereste myne intente;
But for this people that standeth by,
Speake I the more openlye,
That the maye beleeve steadfastlye,
From thee that I was sente.—
Lazarre, com fourth, I byde thee.

LAZARRUS.

A! Lorde, blessed moste thou be!
From death to life hath raysed me
Through thy mickell mighte.
Lorde, when I harde the voyce of thee,
All hell fayled of ther posté,
So faste from them my sowle can fleye,
All devilles were afrayde.

JESUS.

Losse hym nowe, and let hym goe.

MARTHA.

O Lorde, honoured be thou owe,
That us haste saved from moch woe,
As thou haste ofte before.

For well I wiste it shoulde be soe,
When you were full farre froe!
Thee, Lorde, I honer and no moe,
Kneelinge upon my knye.

MARIA.

O Lorde Jesus, moche is thy mighte,
For nowe my harte is glade and lighte,
To see my brother rise in my sighte,
Here before all thes men.
Well I hoped that sone in heighte,
When thou came, I should fare arighte,
Thee, Lorde, I honour with all my mighte,
Kneelinge upon my knye.
O Lorde Jesu, I thanke thee,
That on my brother hath pittie,
By vereye signes nowe men maie se
That thou arte Godes sonne.
With thee ever, Lorde, will I be,
And serve thee with harte frey,
That this daye hath gladded me,
And allwaye with thee wonne.

JESUS.

Have good daye, my daughters deare!
Wherever you goe, farre or nere,
My blessinge I geve you here.
To Jerusalem I take the waie.

Finis. Deo gracias! per me, Georgi Bellin. 1592.

NOTES.

Page 1, *Banes.*—Concerning these *bans,* or proclamations, see the Introduction. *Ban* is a French word, and signifies a proclamation by sound of trumpet. It is preserved in the *bans* of marriage, and in the word to *banish* (*banner,* to put to the *ban,* to proclaim, warn away by the ban). There is a similar set of *bans* to the Coventry Mysteries, which Mr. Halliwell entitles the Prologue, and which was to be spoken by three *vexillatores,* standard-bearers, or heralds. The *bans* of the Chester Plays are here printed from MS. Harl. No. 2013.

Page 4, *cappers*—makers of caps, answering to the French *bonnetiers.*

Page 5, *corvisors*—shoemakers.

Page 6, *ffletchers, boweyers, stringers*—trades connected with the making of bowes: the fletchers put on the feathers; the other terms explain themselves.

Page 6, *ffusterers*—rough workers in wood, carpenters, joiners, &c.: from the old French word, *fust,* wood.

Page 7, *shermen*—shear-men, cloth-shearers; *ib., hewsters*—probably huxters.

Page 7, The Fall of Lucifer.—The legendary story of the fall of Lucifer appears to have been exceedingly popular in the West from the earliest ages of Christianity in these parts. It forms a very remarkable portion of the Anglo-Saxon poetry attributed to Cædmon, and appears in other Anglo-Saxon writings. Milton perhaps founded some of his most magnificent pictures on the rude groundwork of the Mysteries. The Cursor Mundi, MS. Cotton, Vespas. A. III., fol. 4, ro., after having described the creation of the angels, gives the following account of the fall of Lucifer:—

This numbre that he ordend than
Suld be bath of angel and man;
For mensked wit tuin maner o scaft
Wald he be that king o craft,
That es wit angel that es gastli,
And wit man that es bodili.
Of angels wald he served be,
That suld of ordres haf thris thre,

He ches til him that laverd hend,
The men suld mak the ordre tend.
But the angel he wroght formast
Of all he gaf an povar mast;
For thof thai all war fair and wis,
And sum of less and sum mare pris,
He gaf an mast of all sele,
If he cuth hafe born it wele,
And sette him heist in his hall
Als prince and sire over other all;
And for that he was fair and bright,
Lucifer to nam he hight.
Wen he perceved him he this
That he was over all other in blis,
Allas! caitif! he kneu him noght,
That hee drightin that had him wroght;
For ilhail sagh he that tide,
Agains him he tok a pride,
Hetlik he lette of ilk fere,
To Godd self wald he be pere;
Noght pere allan, bot mikul mare,
For under him he wald all ware,
And be him self thair comandur.
Qua herd ever a warr auntur,
That he that noght hadd bot of him,
Agayn him suld becum sua grim?
"Sette," he said, "my sete I sal
Gain him that heist es of all:
In the north side it sal be sette,
O me servis sal he non gette.
Qui suld I him servis yeild?
Al sal be at myn auen weild."
Bot he was merred of hys mint:
Ful son he fand unstern stint,
For langer than he thoght this pride,
In heven moght he na langer abide.
For in that curt that es sa clene
May na filth in dwell, wituten wene.
Sent Micheal for thare aller right
Rais again him for to fight,
Again him gaf a batell grim,
Out of that hei curt kest him,
Lucifer first dune he broght
And sithen that till him holded oght,
And schurd that curt o tham sa clene,
That sithen thar sted was never sene.
This is the feind that formast fell
Thoru his ouengart into hell;
Fra than his nam changed was,
For now es he cald Sathanas.
Fra ful hei he fel ful law,
That of his laverd wald stand nanaw,
Witouten covering of his care,
Thar he ne has merci nevermare,
For Godd aght noght gif tham merci
That thar efter wil not cri,
And thus he leses his gret honur.
Thar he badd noght fullik an ure;
For alsuithe als he was made
He fell, was thar na langer bade.
Thas other gastes that fell him wiht,
The quilk forsok Godds grith,
Efter the will thai till him bare,
Than fell thai depe or lesse or mare:
Sum in the air, sum in the lift,
Thar thai drei ful hard schrift,
Thar pin thai bere opon tham ai,
And sua sal do to domes-dai.
Bot thai that left, witoten wite,
Thai ware confermed thar als tite,
That thai mai nevermar held til il,
Namar than the wirk mai to God will.
The numbre that out of heven fell,
Tho can na tung in erth tell,
Ne fra the trone quar he can sitte
How farr es into hell pitte:
Bot Bede sais fra erth to heven
Es seven thusand yeir and hundret seven,
Bi jornes qua that gang it may
Fourti mile on ilk day.

The notion expressed in the latter part of this extract, of a part of the fallen angels having been distributed in the air and other elements, was a popular superstition in the Middle Ages, and is frequently alluded to by old writers. In the Towneley and Coventry Mysteries, the fall of Lucifer is briefly represented, and forms only the introduction to the play of the Creation. In the long "Mystère de la Nativité de Jesus Christ" (Jubinal's Mystères inédits, tom. ii.), which begins with the Creation, this legend is not brought in; but it appears in a printed collection of old French mysteries, entitled "Le tresexcellent et Sainct Mystere du Vieil Testament," fol. Paris, 1542. In this latter work, the Mysteries begin with the creation of Heaven, which is followed by that of the ten orders of angels, after which the angels, with Lucifer, join in worshipping the Creator, and sing in chorus the hymn—

O lux beata Trinitas,
Et principalis unitas,
Jam sol recedit igneus,
Infunde lumen cordibus.

Then Lucifer begins to talk proudly, and offers to sit upon God's throne and make the angels adore him, for which he is driven from Heaven. Next follows the creation, day by day. The scene representing the lamentations and mutual recriminations of the fallen angels is sufficiently curious to be given as a specimen of these French mysteries.

Adoncques doivent trebuscher Lucifer et ses anges le plus soubdainement qu'il sera possible. Et doit avoir autant de dyables tous prestz en enfer, lesquelz en menant grande tempeste getteront feu, et dira ce qui s'ensuyt.

LUCIFER.
En despit et de rage urlans,
Blasphemans l'essence immortelle,
Nostre damnation querans
Sommes, et par nostre cautelle.

SATHAN.
De gloire divine, eternelle,
Sommes à tout jamais bennys.

ASTAROTH.
Par la puissance supernelle
Estroictement sommes pugnis.

CERBERUS.
De ce glorieux paradis,
Par nostre orgueil ainsi que foulx,
Sommes bennys et interditz.
Helas! helas! que ferons nous?

MAMONA.
Nostre orgueil nous a deceuz tous,
Et par ton intercession,
Lucifer.

LUCIFER.
Je meurs de courroux,
Quen pense à ma rebellion.

SATHAN.
En lieu remply d'infection
Sommes tumbez suans buans.

LUCIFER.
Harau! harau! je me repens!
Où sommes nous, dyables infernaulx?

SATHAN.
Il n'est pas temps, il n'est pas temps!

LUCIFER.

Harau! harau! je me repens!

MAMONA.

Plongez sommes avecques serpens,
Couleuvres, dragons, et crappaulx.

LUCIFER.

Harau! harau! je me repens!
Où sommes nous, dyables infernaulx?

ASMODEUS.

Faulx serpent, remply de tous maulx,
Tu as brassé telle poison.

LEVIATAN.

Servans doivent estre loyaulx
A leur maistre en toute saison.

LUCIFER.

Harau! harau! quel desraison!
Qu'ay-je faict, dyables, quay-je-faict?
Harau! qu'esce cy, quel prison!
Qui m'a mis en lieu tant infaict?

AGRAPPART.

Faulx dyable, c'est par ton forfaict
Que sommes ainsi tresbuschez.

CERBERUS.

Ton orguelleux villain meffaict
Nous a causé tous noz pechez.

LUCIFER.

Harau! par trop sommes attachez
Sans aucune intercession.

ASTAROTH.

Au puis d'enfer sommes fichez
A jamais sans remission.

LUCIFER.

N'y vault rien intercession,
Supplication, ne priere.

SATHAN.

Jamais n'aurons la vision
De l'ineffalible lumiere!

MAMONA.

En ce gouffre plein de fumiere
Sommes mis pour peine et tempeste.

ASMODEUS.

Plus ne verrons gloire tant clere.
Que le dyable y ait malle feste!

LEVIATAN.

Pour rien nous rompons bien la teste,
Car il n'est grace ne mercy.

AGRAPPART.

Rien n'y vauldroit don ne requeste:
Force est de demourer icy.

LUCIFER.

Harau! hau! dyables, qu'esse cy?

CERBERUS.

Faulx ennemy, c'est tout par toi.

ASTAROTH.

En peine, travail, et soucy,
Nous as mis par trop grant arroy.

LUCIFER.

Dyables, bien scay que c'est par moy
Et par vostre consentement,
Pourquoy en douloureux esmoy
Serons perpetuellement.
Je brusle, j'ay peine et tourment,
En lieu de joye et de lyesse:
Car en enfer incessamment
Suis livré en dueil et tristesse.

SATHAN.

Feu de soulfre ardant nous oppresse,
Oultre vermisseaulx venimeux
Nous causent douleur et destresse
En cest abisme tenebreux.

MAMONA.

En lieu obscur, layt, et hideux,
Souffre puant, abhominable,
Sommes mis en feu langoureux
Et toute peine intollerable.

LUCIFER.

Où suis-je mis, condamné dyable,
Privé du haultain paradis?
De tous suis le plus miserable:
Car je suis au parfond du puis.

ASMODEUS.
Faulx dragon, tu nous a seduitz
Par ta mauvaise ambition,
Dont avons perdu tous delitz
Et divine illustration.

LEVIATAN.
En tartaricque infection
Et maintenant nostre appareil,
En lieu de jubitation
Et de tout triumphe eternel.

AGRAPPART.
Lucifer, est par ton conseil
Que nous sommes à bas confonduz:
Car en lieu du bien supernel,
Sommes au parfond d'enfer fonduz.

CERBERUS.
Dueil et travaulx nous sont renduz,
Pour toute lyesse et soulas:
Car en lieu de chanter lassus,
Nous fault crier et dire helas.

ASTAROTH.
De joye et vertueulx esbas
Sommes tous privez et bannis,
Et tresbuschez tout au plus bas,
Dont griefvement sommes pugnis.

LUCIFER.
Dyables, huyons et menons crye,
C'est le plus beau de nostre chance.

SATHAN.
Nous qui sommes en enfer escriptz,
Dyables, huyons et menons crys.

MAMONA.
Estonnons les cieulx par noz huirs,
En infernalle residence.

ASMODEUS.
Dyables, huyons et menons crys,
C'est le plus beau de nostre chance.

Pause.—Adoncques se doit faire une grande tempeste en enfer.

The stage-directions in some of the French mysteries present a curious picture of the machinery of these primitive performances. When Lucifer is driven out of heaven, the direction is—*Adoncque se doivent eslever Lucifer et ses anges par une roue secretement faicte dessus ung pivos à vis.* When God separates light from darkness, *Adoncques se doit monstrer ung drap painct, c'est assavoir la moytié toute blanche et l'autre toute noire.* When the Creator separates the waters, *Adoncques se doit monstrer comme une mer, qui par avant ayt esté couverte, et des poissons dedans icelle mer.* At the creation of the heavenly bodies, *Adoncques se doit monstrer ung ciel painct tout semé d'estoilles et les noms des planettes.* And when God creates the fowls, *Adoncques doit on secrettement getter petis oyseaulx volans on l'air, et mettre sur terre oysons, cynes, canes, cocqus, poulles, et autres oyseaulx, avecques le plus de bestes estranges que on pourra trouver.*

Page 7, *pagina prima, etc.*—This title is not found in the manuscript from which we print the text. It may be observed that the speech put into the mouth of the Creator would have been more correctly arranged in long lines,—

It is my will yt shoulde be soe, het is, yt was, it shall be thus:
I am great God gracious, which never hade beginninge, etc.

Page 7, line 17, *mea licentia*—The MSS. have *mei licencell.*

Page 9, line 10, *dissolvemus*—MS. H. reads *dissolved;* line 13, *solotacion*—singleness, loneness (?); line 14, *biglye*—pleasant, delightful.

Page 9, line 29, *nine orderes* — The nine orders were angels, archangels, thrones, dominations, principates, potestates, virtues, cherubin, and seraphim. The tenth order was that to be filled up by the creation of man.

Page 10, line 11, *Lucifier and Lightborne*—I have not found this distinction of the two fallen angels in other versions of the legend.

Page 10, line 16, *ausculte*—MS. H. reads *exsalte.*

Page 13, CHERAPHIN—MS. H. reads CHERUBYN.

Page 15, line 13, *fullgens* — refulgence, brightness; line 21, *teene and traye*—trouble and vexation.

Page 16, line 25, *cumber* — to be benumbed, confounded with grief; *counger*—to shrink.

Page 17, line 3, [*aye*].—The writer of the MS. from which the text is given has here and in many other places substituted *ever* for *aye,* which destroys the rhyme.

Page 17, line 8, *tell beames blowe.* — Till trumpets blow. The following lines are quoted in Jamison's Dictionary—

He seyth whethir that I ete or drynke,
Other do ought elles, evere me thynke
That *the beem that schal blowe* at domesday
Sowneth in myn ere, and thus say:
"Rys up, ye that ben dede, and come
Unto the dredful day of dome."

Page 18, line 21, *i-mente*—designed, conceived.

Page 20, THE CREATION AND FALL.—The plot of the second play is taken with little alteration from the book of Genesis. In the Towneley and Coventry Mysteries, the death of Abel forms a separate piece. In the two French collections of Mysteries mentioned in a former note, a legendary incident is added, which appears not to have been popular in England—when Adam attempts to swallow the apple, it sticks in his throat, and will not stir,

Adam prengne la pomme et morde, et se prengne parmy la gorge, et die:

Ha hay! je suy mal avoiez:
Ce morcel ne puis avaler.
Las doulereux! qu'il est amer!
En la gorge la mort me tient.

Jubinal's Mystères inédits, vol. ii, p. 9.

According to the legend, which is still prevalent in France, but which does not appear to have existed in England, this incident was the cause of the lump in the man's throat, which has been preserved ever since.

Page 20, line 7, *lee* — joy, pleasure; line 11, *tweyned* — divided, separated; line 12, *sternes* — stars; line 18, *lente* — placed.

Page 22, line 2, *matter* — perhaps a mistake for *watter;* line 12, *eare* — air.

Page 23, line 4, *in feare* — in company; line 15, *with wyne*—with joy.

Page 24, line 24, *a fere* — a companion.

Page 25, line 2, *a make* — a partner; line 4, *as thy leiste* — as pleases you; line 7, *mase* — makes; line 9, *sawe* — saying, decree.

Page 25, line 11, *Virragoo.*—The following lines from the *Cursor Mundi,* MS. Cotton Vesp. A. III., fol. 5, ro., illustrate this passage:

Ute of his side, als sais the boke,
Witoten sare a rib he tok,
And of that rib he mad woman,
Til Adam that was first is an.
Quen sco was broght befor Adam,
Virago gaf he hir to nam:
Tharfor hight sco *virago,*
For maked o the man was sco.

Page 25, line 16, *postie* — power.

Page 25, line 22, *stande nackede.*—This stage-direction, combined with a passage farther on, p. 29, has been cited as proving that the condition of our first parents was represented literally on the stage. I am strongly inclined to think that this is altogether an error, that the direction is merely figurative, and that the persons who represented our first parents were only to be supposed to be in a state of nudity. Still that part of the performance which related to the fig-leaves could not be otherwise than what would now be considered very indecorous.

Page 26, line 12, *be my laye*—perhaps, by my faye; line 23, *dighte me* — address myself; *tytte* — immediately; line 33, *liccoris* — nice, delicate.

Page 27, line 4, *brocke I my pane*—I enjoy or possess my head; line 8, *forma puella*—The MSS. read *forma torma puella.* In Piers Ploughman, l. 12753, the serpent which tempted Eve is described as "y-lik a lusard, with a lady visage."

Page 28, line 22, *life*—is probably an error of the scribe for *lefe* or *leve,* beloved; line 24, *lefe feare*—dear companion.

Page 29.—The conversation which follows between Adam and Eve resembles very much the parallel scene in the French Mystère du Vieil Testament already quoted:

ADAM.

Je suis honteux de ma nature,
Quant je voy ma fragilité,

Donc je vueil chercher couverture
Pour musser mon humanité.

Adoncques doit Adam couvrir son humanité, faignant avoir honte.

Eve.

Bien voy que mon iniquité
Me veult de joye absenter:
Car je congnois pour verité
Que honte et vergongne requier.

Icy se doit semblablement vergongner la femme et se musser de sa main.

Adam.

Prenons fueilles de ce figuier,
Pour couvrir noz membres honteux.
Et puis nous en irons musser
En quelque lieux entre nous deux.

Eve.

Allons: car je voy de mes yeulx
Le danger que mon mal pourchasse.
Mussons nous es plus secretz lieux,
Car honte et pudeur nous dechasse.

Adoncques doivent cueillir des fueilles du figuier, et eulx en couvrir.

Page 29, line 11, *nye*—injury, annoyance; line 13, *for thy*—therefore; line 14, *shape*—I believe that *shape* here means the *pudenda,* the Anglo-Saxon *ge-sceapu*; line 17, *witterlye*—truly; line 21, *a hillinge*—a covering.

Page 31, line 11, *behette*—promise; line 12, *of lette*—care about; line 28, *warryed*—accursed.

Page 32, line 8, *south to sayne*—to tell the truth; line 9, *unbayne*—disobedient; line 17, *in longor am I lente*—I am placed in languor, or sorrow; line 21, *kente*—perhaps for *shente,* ruined.

Page 33, line 1, *lee*—joy; line 2, *hilled*—covered; line 17, *fulfilled*—evidently a mistake of the scribe for *fulfill*; line 18, *este*—(?) line 28, *linge*—remain, dwell; line 30, *weale or wyne*—prosperity or pleasure.

Page 34, line 14, *coise*— (?)

Page 35, line 7, *fonne*—foe, enemy; line 15, *lente*—given.

Page 35, line 25, *while that I slepte*—Adam's vision is one of the legends added to the text of Scripture in the superstitious ages of the church. It is not alluded to in the other English collections of mysteries. In some of the legends, which are followed by Milton in the conclusion of his Paradise Lost, the vision is shewn to Adam, not in his sleep as here, but after his transgression, when he is ejected from Paradise. Thus in the old English version of an apocryphal life of Adam (MS. Harl. No. 1704, fol. 24, ro.) when describing Adam's deathbed, it is said:—

And Adam said to Seth, "Sone, here me, I shall tell the what that we seeth and herd after that we were cast out of Paradise, I and thy moder, as we were in orysoun, Michaell, Goddis messengere came to me, and I sigh orders of angles as thicke as wynde being in a fayre serkell, and I sigh a chare, and the whelis therof as fyre. Than I was ravesshid into Paradise, and ther I sawe oure Lord, and his semblaunt was as fyre brennyng, and his chere was so bright that I myght not endure to loke theron, and a gret multitude of angeles were aboute the beames of the brightnes of his semblaunte, and I sigh an other wondyrfull company of angelles being on his right side and lyft side, and I was in gret drede and made my prayer to God in erth, and my lord God said to me, 'Wete thou well that thou shalt die, for thou foryete my commaundement and herdis the worde of thy wyff, the which I yaff unto the to be thy underlyng and thy seget at thi will, and thou obeydest to hyr and not to me.' And when I herd these wordes, I fell downe to the erth and saide, 'Lord, most myghtfull and most merciable God, both blissid and meke, ne foryete the not thi worshipfull name of deynte, but comfort thou my soule whan I deye and my sprite passith out of my mouth, ne cast me not awey fro thy face, which that thou hast made of the sleyme of the erth, nother put hym behynde that thou hast norisched with thi grace, behold' how thy wordis bronnyn me.' And our Lord God saide to me, 'For thyne hert is suche that thou lovest science and connyng and godenesse and repentance, ne thou shalt not be done awey fro thy connyng, and the seed that comyth of the that will serve me shall never be lore.' And when I herde these wordes, I honowred hym lowly on the erth, and said, 'Thou art God withoute begynnyng and endyng, and every creature oweth to worship the and love the, thou art above all lightes shyning, thou art very light of lyffe, thou art such as nothyng may tell ne comprehende in witte. O thilke gret vertu of God, all creaturs to the gevyne honour and praysyng, whan thou hast made mankynd through thy gret vertu.' And anon as I had prayed this, Michaell the archangell of God toke my honde, and cast me out of Paradise in the visitacouns fro the sight of God, and Michaell helde a yerde in his hond with which he tocgid the waters that went in the serquite of Paradise, and with the which twochyng of the forsaide yerde they congelid togedyr into yse, and I went uppon hem, and Michaell went with me, and lad me agen into the plase of Paradice, fro the which he ravished me, and eft ayeward he led me to the lake ther he ravesshed me. Now, my son Seth, here me, and I shall shew to the the privytes that be to me and the sacramentes that ben shewen to me for why I understond and know thinges that be to come in this temperall, the which God made for mankynd, that is to say, I had my knowing and my understondyng of thing that is to come be the etyng that I ete of the tre of understondyng."

Adam then goes on to relate what should happen to his descendants, and to foretel their final redemption. According to another version of the legend, which is given in the French Mysteries edited by M. Jubinal, and in the English Cursor Mundi, the vision was shown to Seth when sent to Paradise by his dying father to seek for the oil of mercy. He receives, according to one story, three seeds to place in his dead father's mouth, according to another, a branch to plant upon his grave, from which, in the course of ages, was to be derived the wood of the cross.

Page 36, line 9, *watter or fier.*—This incident is found in another legend—the history of the seven arts or sciences, which Adam is said to have received directly from God and transmitted to his descendants. This will be recognized as the foundation of the eighth book of the "Paradise Lost." Adam knew that mankind would be destroyed by fire or water, but was uncertain which: his children received from him the knowledge of these arts as well as of the threatened danger, and, in order to preserve the latter, engraved them on two columns of different materials, which might withstand both fire and water. See Mr. Halliwell's "History of Freemasonry in England," p. 6; see also the Cursor Mundi, MS. Cotton, Vespas. A. III., fol. 10, ro. The French "Image du Monde," of the thirteenth century, speaks thus of Adam:—

Chil seut les vij. ars de clergie
Mius que nus c'onques fust en vie,
Com chil que Dius les eut aprises.
Puis furent par maint autre quises,
Qui paine de les savoir eurent,
Pour le deluve, que il seurent,
Qui devoit avenir au monde
Par fu, ou par eus, ou par fonde.
Puis Adam furent maintes gens
Qui des vij. ars eurent le sens,
Que Dius leur envoia en tere,
Dont aucun i eut qui enquere
Vaurent que li mons devendroit,
Et se jamais defineroit,
Si trouverent tout sans falir
Qu'il devoit ij. fois defalir:
A l'une fois par fu ardant,
Et à l'autre par iave grant,
Mais ne vaut à chele fois
Cou feust par lequel anchois,
D'iave ou de fu ardant, si eurent
Partie de clergie qui seurent
Que ensi seroient peries,
S'eles n'estoient garanties.

Page 36, line 26, *underffoe*—to perform, undertake; line 30, *rigges*—ridges, balks; *reian*—a gutter; line 34, *heiste*, commandment.

Page 37, line 1, *bowne*—ready; line 16, *unbuxom*—disobedient; line 21, *to hill*—to cover, shield; line 26, *this*—an error of the scribe (recurring frequently) for *thus;* line 31, *a tylle man*—a husbandman, or cultivator of the earth.

Page 37, line 30, Cayme.—In the Towneley and Coventry Mysteries, the Death of Abel forms a separate play: and in the former a somewhat ludicrous character is given to it by the vulgar conversations between Cain and his boy. There are no legendary incidents in the English plays on this subject. The dialogue of the Chester Play resembles in some parts that of the analagous portion of the French Mystère du Vieil Testament, before quoted, in which Cain is introduced, full of pride and ambition, contriving how he shall be lord over all mankind: he consults with his son, Enoch, and they determine to build a fortified city. Then the scene changes, and Adam is introduced ordering his sons to perform sacrifice. Abel obeys willingly, but Cain proceeds doggedly, and offers some of his worst corn. He quarrels with his brother for the success of his sacrifice —is jealous, because he thinks it is a sign of Abel's superiority—asks his brother to walk out into the field (compare p. 40, l. 20, of the present volume), and there kills him. In the Cursor Mundi (MS. Cotton, Vespas. A. III., fol. 7, ro.) there is an allusion to another legend of the middle ages, according to which, when Cain had slain his brother Abel and proceeded to bury the body, the earth rejected it, and he was thus unable to conceal his wicked deed:—

Again Abel he raysed striif,
Wit murth he did his broither o liif;
Wit the chafte ban of a ded has,
Men sais that tharwit slan he was.
And quen he had his broither slan,
Bigan to hid his cors o nan;
Bot proved was son his sari pride,
The bodi moght he nan gat hide,
For under erth most it not rest,
The clai ai up that bodi kest:
His broither ded sua wend he dil,
Bot he moght nourquar it hil.
For thi men sais that to this tide
Is naman that murth mai hide.

In the Coventry Mysteries, Cain is made to cover his brother's corpse with grass (p. 38):—

With this gresse I xal hym hylle."

Page 38, line 1, *daddye*—MS. H. reads *father.*

Page 40, line 21, *a littill froo*—a little distance; line 27, *congion*—a dwarf, poor fellow.

Page 41, line 9, *efte*—again; *grase*—grace, favour; line 17, *I wotte nere* —I know never; line 26, *waryed*—accursed.

Page 42, line 1, *unleffe*—loathsom, literally unbeloved; line 9, *lenge* —remain; *lewtye*—loyalty; line 22, *bone*—prayer, the thing prayed for, a boon; line 29, *truste mone*—you may trust, rest assured (?)

Page 42, line 10, *be bounde and nothinge freey.*—In the earlier stages of society, it was a common punishment for great crimes to condemn the perpetrator to bondage or servitude.

Page 43, line 3, *groo*—perhaps an error of the scribe for *goo;* line 18, *dadde and mam*—MS. H. furnishes the better reading, *sire and dame,* and again, two lines below, *dame and sier*; line 19, *walson*—curse (?); line 25, *ruffull is my read*—rueful is my counsel.

Page 44, line 3, *i-wysse*—truly; it is the Anglo-Saxon *ge-wis*. The later scribe has very erroneously written it *I wysse*, as though it were a pronoun and a verb; line 6, *mone*—may; line 9, *losscell*—a losel, an abandoned wretch; line 10, *for-scapte*—driven out of, banished from.

Page 45, Noah's Flood—The flood holds a prominent place in all the English series of mysteries. The dispute between Noah and his wife is peculiar to the Towneley and Chester plays. It is alluded to by Chaucer, Miller's Tale, v. 3533—

> "Hast thou not herd how saved was Noe,
> Whan that our Lord had warned him beforne,
> That al the world with water shuld be lorne?"
> "Yes," quod this carpenter, "ful yore ago."
> "Hast thou not herd," quod Nicholas, "also
> The sorwe of Noe with his felawship,
> Or that he mighte get his wif to ship?
> Him had be lever, I dare wel undertake,
> At thilke time, than all his wethers blake,
> That she had had a ship hire self alone."

The appropriate distribution of this play to "the water leaders and the drawers of Dee" was probably designed.

Page 45, line 5, *linge in mone*—remain in man; line 8, *blyne*—cease; line 22, *slyche*—plaster (?); line 23, *neye thou slake*—do not discontinue, or slacken.

Page 45, line 19, *a shippe sone thou shall make thee.*—Compare with this passage the description of the ark in the Towneley and Coventry Mysteries. In the Cursor Mundi, Noah receives the following directions on this subject:—

> "A schippe behoves the to dight,
> Thi self sal be the maister wright.
> I sal the tell hou lang, hou brade,
> O quat mesur it sal be made.
> Quen thi timber es festend wele,
> Thou wind the sides ilk dele:
> First bind it wele with balk and band,
> And wind it sithen well with wand;
> Wit pike thu lok it be noght thyn,
> Plaster it witoute and witin.
> Seven score ellen lang and ten,
> Thrys aght on wyde, on heght fiveten;
> Fiveten on heght, that es thentent,
> Fra grund unto the tabulment.
> It sal be made wit stages sere,
> Ilkon to serve a thair mistere.
> Thu sal binethen on the side
> Mak a dor wit mesur wide,
> A windou sperand wel on hei;
> Thou lok thi werk be noght unslei;
> A hous als in to drink and ete,
> And wardropp that thou noght forget."

MS. Cotton, Vespas., A. III., fol. 11, ro.

Page 46, line 6, *sutte*—shut (?); line 9, *ronette chamberes one or too.*—

MS. H. reads, *three rounde chambers one a roe*; line 18, *to spill* — to destroy, ruin; line 28, *bowne*—ready.

Page 47, line 7, *boute dyne*—without din, i.e., without any more noise or talk; line 19, *amounte*—probably an error of the scribe for *anointe*; *stiche*—(?); line 22, *in feare*—in company.

Page 48, line 11, *cabelles*—cables—MS. H. reads *gables*; line 21, *frynishe* —nice, ingenious (?); line 22, *reade* — counsel; line 24, *not or I see* — not before I see, not till I see.

Page 49, line 4, *maiste* — makest; line 10, *meanye* — household; line 16, *make to make* — partner to partner; line 26, *mone* — may; line 29, *bydene*—immediately; line 31, *tell*—till.

Page 50, line 6, *unrihtes*—wrongs; line 9, *beane*—obedient; line 22, [*two*]—this word is added from MS. H.

Page 51, line 6, *atter* — probably otter; line 7, *gile*—(?) MS. H. reads *goale*; line 8, *coule* — cabbage (?)—MS. H. reads *coale*; line 10, *marmosette* — a monkey—MS. H. reads *mare mussett*; line 14, *crouse*—brisk, lively; line 15, *rotton* — for *ratton*, a rat; line 18, *bittor* — bitterns; line 21, *croes*—crows; line 22, *roes*—rows (?).

Page 52, line 1, *digges*—ducks: *dig*, or *digg*, is the word for *duck* still used in the dialect of Cheshire; line 2, *roninge through lackes* — running through lakes; line 18, *cheiste*—a chest; line 19, *wher thy leiste*—where it please thee; line 21, *wrawe*—angry, enraged — MS. H. has *ny* instead of *wrawe*, and ends the next line with *I do not see.*

Page 53, line 17, *Malmsine*—Malmsey.

Page 54, line 5, *botte* — a boat; line 9, *renewes* — probably an error of the scribe for *remeves*, i.e., removes; line 14, *that worckes not thy will is wood*—he is mad that works not thy will.

Page 55, line 7, *able* — fit, proper; line 10, *myne* — think; line 11, *warrye* — curse; line 20, *behitte* — promise; line 28, *rouge dead carrine* —read dead carrion; line 30, [*ever*] — this word and *is* in the line following are inserted from MS. H.

Page 56, line 1, *oughte wher*—any where; line 6, *a forwarde* — a promise, covenant; line 11, *ney*—nor; line 13, *spill*—destroy; line 25, *this*— for *thus*; line 29, *behight*—promise.

Page 57, THE HISTORIES OF LOT AND ABRAHAM. — The war of Abraham and Lot and the four kings is not found in the Towneley and Coventry series. Its object was of course in great part to enforce upon the populace the obligation of paying tithes, and it ends with a prophecy of Christ, which was the grand point of all these Old Testament mysteries.

Page 57, line 9, *for south*—forsooth, in truth; line 16, *lettinge*—hindering, delaying.

Page 58, line 4, *whom*—home; line 7, *uncothe*—strange; line 11, *teath*—tenth, tithe—there should be only a comma at the end of this line; line 17, *skill*—reason.

Page 59, line 1, read, *My lorde the kinge, tydinges, etc:* the comma has been transposed by accident; line 6, *dighte*—prepared, furnished, brought.

Page 60, line 28, *petrye*—a mistake of the scribe for *perrye,* precious stones.

Page 61, line 19, *postie*—power.

Page 62, line 6, *mandê*—maundy; line 12, *teathinges-makinge*—tythe making; line 13, *of Abraham begonnan were*—were begun by Abraham; line 28, *witterlye*—truly.

Page 63, line 4, *nurye*—a foster child; line 5, *to appeare* — to appair, to sustain injury; line 12, *tell*—count; line 13, *straye*—sky (?); line 21, *forwarde*—a covenant; line 26, *forbye*—redeem.

Page 64, line 14, *tane*—taken.

Page 64, line 28, ABRAHAM.—The story of Abraham's sacrifice forms a separate play in the Towneley and Coventry Mysteries. In the latter collection it is followed by that of Moses and the two Tables, which completes the Old Testament series. There are some points of resemblance between the Chester Play and the corresponding portion of the French Mystère du Viel Testament.

Page 65, line 3, [*offer*] — this word is inserted from MS. H.; line 12, *kente*—taught, for *kende;* line 16, *leinges*—remaining, tarrying; line 28, *burne*—a burthen, or bundle—MS. H. reads *faggot.*

Page 66, line 3, *beane*—obedient, or perhaps for *bowne,* ready.

Page 67, line 9. The rhymes enable us easily to restore the last words in these lines to the form which they must have had in the original:—

Father, I am full sore *aferde*
To see you beare that drawne *swerde*.
I hope for all *middel-erde*
You will not slay your childe.
Drede thee not, my childe, I *rede,*
Our Lorde will sende of his *godhede*
Some manner of beaste into this *stede*
Either tame or wilde.

Page 68, line 4, [*twaie*]. — I have substituted this word by conjecture: the MS. has *in sunder,* which destroys the rhyme. MS. H. concludes the first line of the couplet with *praye thee,* and reads in the second *my harte anon in three*; line 5, *leane*—conceal; line 12, a *yarde*—a rod.

Page 69, line 10, *to leane*—to conceal ; line 11, *bayne*—obedient ; line 13, *dilfull*—dolefull ; line 19, *ouste*—ousted, expelled.

Page 70, line 9, *eyne*—eyes ; line 12, *grylle*—am terrified.

Page 71, line 12, *skille*—reason ; line 17, *yonge*—in the original the word was probably *ying*.

Page 72, line 6, *a carschaffe*—a kerchief; line 7, *let*—leave ; line 23, *maner a waye*—manner of way.

Page 73, line 15, read *Jesu ! on me thou have pittye*.

Page 75, line 8, *bonere*—for *debonere*, gentle.

Page 77, BALAAM AND HIS ASS.—This subject is not found in the other English collections of Mysteries. It may be compared with the corresponding portion of the French Mystère du Viel Testament so often quoted.

Page 77, line 1, *leive*—beloved ; line 7, *nam* — take ; line 15, *leinge* — tarrying : MS. A. reads *longe leinge*.

Page 78, line 15, *pearles of postie*—peerless of power ; line 17, *blyne*—to cease ; line 22, *fonge*—to take ; line 31, *mamentrye*—idolatry.

Page 79, line 17, *wotte*—know.

Page 80, line 2, *spell*—speech ; line 5, *bodelye*—bodily ; line 13, *kyse*—(?) ; line 24, *boutles*—bootless ; line 30, *wrocken*—avenge.

Page 81, line 4, *foundes* — attempts, undertakes ; line 5, *boute* — boot, remedy ; line 6, *the*—they ; line 11, *southlye*—truly ; line 15, *polesye*—policy ; line 16, *losscilles* — wretches, vagabonds ; line 17, *leve*—believe ; line 28, *reformed*—for *informed*.

Page 82, line 22, *fatch in* — for *fetch him* ; line 30, *hette* — promise ; *greate one*—great abundance.

Page 83, line 2, *freckes*—men, fellows ; line 11, *wytte in hye*—know in haste ; line 19, *unlikinge*—displeasure, unpleasant ; line 20, *woninge*—winning, gain.

Page 84, line 6, *leve one* — believe in ; line 10, *houlde the kinge that he beheighte* — if the king hold what he promised ; line 12, *warryed the shalbe*—they shall be cursed ; line 18, *goodes*—gods. Ruffyn, the name of one of these gods, occurs elsewhere as the name of a demon : the devil was called Ruffian in slang language up to a modern period (see Grose) ; line 26, *burnell*—a common name for an ass, given on account of its colour.

Page 85, line 4, *nowe*—probably an error of the scribe for *thowe ;* line 6, *abye*—make amends for, be punished for ; line 11, *nye*—injure ; line 12, *thrye*—three times, thrice ; line 17, *to lowte*—to bow down.

Page 86, line 23, *as I have wyne*—as I have joy.

Page 87, line 1, *to forby*—to redeem ; line 4, *so mote I thee*—as I may thrive ; line 7, *pearle*—in the original it was no doubt *perrye*, precious stones ; line 14, *in feare*—in company ; line 26, *I none beare* — the MS.

reads *nowe;* line 27, *can weare* — began to defend them, defended them; line 28, *deare*—injure; line 29, *teene*—hurt, trouble.

Page 88, line 2, *grylle*—terrify; line 6, *raproffe*—reproof; line 9, *popularde*—hypocrite; line 11, *dotted*—doated, foolish.

Page 89, line 4, *thrye*—thrice; line 8, *steier*—a star (?); line 13, *dighte and deale* — array and distribute; line 16, *crape* — crop; line 20, *a mote thrie*—(?)

Page 90, line 1, *suer*—sure, safe; line 11, *stalles*—allurements—MS. H. has *stales*—the word *them* in this line is added from MS. H.; line 27, *the reffuce*—they refuse.

Page 92, line 5, *effuscion*—probably a mere error for confusion—MS. H. reads, *were brought to greate effuscion*; line 18, *the cane them drawe*—they drew themselves.

Page 94, THE SALUTATION AND NATIVITY.—This play includes what in some of the collections is distributed into two or three. In the Towneley Mysteries we have separate plays of (1) Cesar Augustus, or the levying of the poll-tax of a penny on each head; (2) the Annunciation; (3) the Salutation, which is very short. In the Coventry Mysteries we have (1) the Barrenness of Anna; (2) Mary in the Temple; (3) Mary's Betrothment; (4) the Salutation and Conception; (5) Joseph's Return; (6) the Visit to Elizabeth; (7) the Trial of Joseph and Mary; and (8) the Birth of Christ. In the old French collection published by M. Jubinal, the Mystery of the Nativity includes all that is contained in our Chester Play, with the addition of the Creation and the Prophets at the beginning, and of the Episode of the Shepherds at the end. There is an old French Mystery, printed in 4to., black letter, at Paris, but without date, entitled "Le Mistere de la Conception, Nativité, Mariage, et Annonciation de la benoiste vierge Marie, avec la Nativité de Jesucrist et son enfance," which includes the Shepherds, the Three Kings, and the Slaughter of the Innocents. A similar, but shorter, English play, formerly acted at Coventry by the tailor and shearmen, is printed in Sharp's Dissertation on the Pageants; it begins with the prophecy of Isaiah, which is followed by the Salutation, Annunciation, Nativity, Story of the Shepherds, the Prophets, Herod and the Three Kings, and the Murder of the Innocents.

Page 94, line 1, *Heale be thou, Marye.*—These lines are a literal translation of the *Ave Maria,* several English versions of which, in prose and verse, some nearly identical with the one in the text, will be found in the Reliquiæ Antiquæ.

Page 95, line 10, *teighte*—promised; line 16, *keydell*—(?) MS. H. reads *kedle.*

Page 96, line 2, *nice*—niece: the comma should be after this word, and not after *Elizabeth ;* line 14, *forthy*—therefore; line 22, *lekinge*—pleasure, liking.

Page 97, line 18—this line appears to be corruptly written; line 22, *hansced*—enhanced, raised; line 26, *betacken*—given; line 27, *wayle*—weal, prosperity; *wacken*—awaked.

Page 98, line 1, *weildinge*—ruling; line 5, *messe*—miss; line 15, *a maye*—a maiden, a young girl; line 26, *plea no leaie*—MS. H. reads *playe no play.*

Page 98, line 13, *alas! alas!*—This story of Joseph's discovery of his wife's pregnancy, after her return from the visit to Elizabeth, and of his anger, which occurs in all the Mysteries, is found in the Latin Evangelium de Nativitate Mariæ and in the Greek Protevangelium Jacobi. According to the legend, when all the Jewish maidens were directed by the law to be married, Mary declared her intention of preserving her virginity, and she was married to Joseph, who was aged and feeble, in order that she might be able to remain a maid without discredit and have a protector: therefore, Joseph, knowing that the marriage had not been consummated, was astonished to find his wife with child. In the Coventry Mysteries, she is brought to trial for her supposed offence.

Page 99, line 5, *discreve*—describe, publish (?); line 19, *to file*—to defile, disgrace.

Page 100, line 2, *man*—perhaps for *mare,* or *ma,* more; line 9, *rombe*—room; line 11, *fayer*—MS. A reads *fraye;* line 19, *food*—child, lad, youth, man: MS. A. reads *fayereste foode faightest fere*; line 20, *frecke*—man, fellow.

Page 100, line 10, *Octavian*—At the end of the old French printed Mystère du Viel Testament, fol. ccc. xvi., there is a Mystery, the plan of which resembles this part of our Chester Play, and which is entitled "Le Mystere de Octavien et Sibille tiburtine touchant la conception et autres Sibilles." Octavian is first introduced discoursing with his senators on the prodigies which had been seen at the beginning of his reign: the scene then changes, and a "painter" is employed to make a superb statue of the emperor, which is to be placed on a column, and the senate determines that the emperor shall be adored as a god: then the *Sibille tiburtine* comes in, and prophecies of Christ. The scene again changes; they tell the emperor of the statue and the decree of the senate, but Octavian expresses some fear that he ought not to be worshipped, and finally determines to send and inquire of the Sibil—the Sibil comes, and tells him he must not be worshipped, and Octavian sees the virgin and child in the sky, accompanied with a vision of Paradise. The dialogue between the painter and his employers is very curious.

Page 100, line 11, *Syble the Sage.*—The prophecies and legends of the Sibils, invented by some zealous Christians in the earlier ages of the church, were very popular during the middle ages, and occur frequently in manuscripts, in different shapes as well as in different languages. At a later period they were proscribed even by the Catholics, so entirely, that even in the well-known hymn of the Romish church,

Dies iræ, dies illa,
Teste David cum Sybilla,
Solvet seclum in favilla,

The second line has been expunged, and is now replaced by *crucis expandens vexilla.* One of the most popular prophecies of the Sibils was the one alluded to in this hymn (in its original form) relating to the day of judgment, and beginning with the line—

Judicii signum, tellus sudore madescet.

Page 101, line 2, *theirtill*—thereto; line 11, *segurrs, etc.*—The modern scribe has so barbarously disfigured the old French of the original manuscript, that it is difficult even to guess at the meaning of a part of it. In MS. H. he has only copied the first lines, which stand thus, rather more correct than in our text:—

Segneurs tous si asembles
Jeo posse fayre lerment et leez
Vas tous si prest me soules
A mes probes estates et mette in langoure
De fayre intentes movalentes
Car jesu savoyroyne bene sages
Et demande emperour.

In the copy of the Mysteries in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, MS. Bodley, No. 175, these lines are arranged as follows:—

Segneurs tous si assembles | amies proles estates
Jeo posse faier lerment et leez | et mette in langoure.
Vous tous si prest ne sortes
De fayer intentes movolentes
Car jesu soveraigne bene sages | et demande emperour
Jeo se persone mille si alle | jeo sic ans faier et leable
En tresowr ne tresagayl | mes de trels plerunt
Destret et say sont en vansell(?) | ami un tame et un pusele
De clare sank de mater frayl | un teel nest paas vivant.

Page 101, line 24, *coysell*—perhaps an error for *ceyser*; *kinge* should evidently be *knighte;* line 25, *soundens solitaryes*—perhaps in the original it was *soudens, senatores,* sultans and senators: MS. H. furnishes the reading, *saundence senatores;* line 26, *princes, prese*—MS. H. reads *preistes:* but *prese here nowe dighte,* i.e., arrayed here now in a crowd, may be right; line 28, *heare my truth i-plighte*—hear my truth plighted: or perhaps it should be *heare my truth I plighte,* here I plight my truth; line 30, *mase*—mace, sceptre (?); line 33, *bayne*—obedient.

Page 102, line 11, *one dese*—on dais, at the high table; line 24, *gammon*—game; line 35, *geiste*—probably an error for *geifte.*

Page 103, line 9, *bowne*—ready; line 10, *Mahounde*—Mahomet: after the wars with the Saracens, this became in Western Europe a common name for any idol or false god, and *mawmetry* signified in general idolatry or heathenism; line 11, *tayles tuppe*—a tup without a tail; line 12, instead of the speech of Octavian which follows here, the other MS. (H.) adds these four additional lines to that of the preco:—

Your errande shalbe done anone:
First into Judy I will gone,
And sommon the people every eichone,
Bouth shier and eke citie.

Page 103, line 19, *i-mente*—determined; line 25, *seicker*—surely.

Page 104, line 16, *siccker*—surely; line 30, *of this*—read, *if this.*

Page 105, line 10, *a barne*—a child; line 20, *mynne*—think.

Page 106, line 4, *in your paie*—in your interest (?); line 11, *tighte*—promised; line 27, *this boisters beare*—this boisterous fellow's bearing or carriage.

Page 107, line 3, *perscer*—a piercer, a gimlet; *nagere*—an auger, an instrument to bore with; line 5, *wonnan*—won, earned; line 14, *balle*—bale, evil.

Page 108, line 2, *houlde*—held, obliged; line 5, *sickinge*—sighing; line 7, *to for-bye*—to redeem; line 12, *tockeninge*—signification; line 17, *the joye*—they rejoice; line 28, *harber*—lodging; *hope*—expect, as in the next page.

Page 109, line 12, *without were*—without doubt.

Page 109, line 16, *Marie, sister*—The story of the two midwives and of the punishment of Salome's incredulity is taken from the apocryphal Protevangelium Jacobi.

Page 109, line 15, *inter bovem et asinam.*—In the middle ages, the infant Jesus, when represented in the manger, was always placed between an ox and an ass. See the legend of the Three Kings at the end of this volume.

Page 110, line 11, *sweete harte*—these words are omitted in MS. H.

Page 110, line 24, *Paine non I felte this nighte.*—It was the constant doctrine of the orthodox during the middle ages, that as Christ had been begotten without sin, so he was born without pain.

Page 111, line 11, *prive*—deprive; *postie*—power; line 15, *crache*—a manger; *lee,* joy.

Page 112, line 1, *childe*—to be delivered, Fr. *enfanter*; line 29, *seckerlye*—surely, certainly: MS. A. reads, *seckeretlye.*

Page 113, line 12, *a temple.*—This is one of the singular legends connected with the ruins of the old Roman buildings. The temple and image alluded to are, according to some histories, ascribed to the enchanter Virgil, who gave it the name of *Salvatio Romæ.* See the History of Virgilius, in Thoms's Early Prose Romances, ii. 19. The circumstance of the falling down of the idols at Christ's birth is introduced in the French Mysteries.

Page 113, line 16, *pearle*—an error of the modern scribe for *perrye*; line 28, *steare*—steer (?); line 30, *all pewer*—(?). MS. H. has, *a pewer.*

Page 114, line 21, *lowte*—to bow down; line 24, *sleate*—sleight, cunning; line 26, *but he so cunningly*—he *who* so cunningly.

Page 115, line 22, *or ever shalbe.*—MS. H. reads, *or ever were*; line 25, *clighte*—perhaps an error for *dighte.*

Page 117, line 8, *Sir, shall this childe.*—In MS. H. these four lines are given as a continuation of Octavian's speech, and stand thus: *This childe shall passe all we | in worthynes, etc.*; line 10, *lewtie*—loyalty. In MS. A. the copyist has here, and in one or two other instances, substituted *bewtie*; line 16, *chourshe*—church.

Page 118, line 2, *teene*—notice (?).

Page 119. THE PLAY OF THE SHEPHERDS.—In our English collections of Mysteries, this play is interesting, because it contains an attempt at an elaborate picture of old country life. In the Chester Mysteries we have a wrestling-bout. Among the Towneley Mysteries we have two plays on this subject, of which the second, the plot of which is a sheep-stealing, is singularly curious: the first is a picture of the shepherds' evening meal in the fields. In the French Mysteries the plot is not worked out with so much care; in the collection edited by M. Jubinal, it consists of a short, coarse dialogue; in the early printed Mistere de la Conception, &c., already mentioned, the shepherds are introduced talking somewhat vulgarly about their mistresses; and on their return from making their offering, they revert to the same conversation, and do not exhibit the pious feelings of the shepherds in the Chester Play.

Page 119, line 6, *under tyldes*—under tents; line 11, *talefull tuppes*—tups with good tails; line 15, *caughe*—a disease of sheep; line 19, *wholl*—whole, sound; line 22, *bybbey raydishe*—(?); *egremounde*—agrimony.

Page 120, line 1, *medled*—mixed; line 3, *on a rooe*—on a row; line 4, *fynter fanter*—(?); *ffetter foe*—(?); line 5, *penye wrytte*—pennywort;

line 7, *yoo*—ewe; line 12, *can*—know; line 20, *the lowe*—the bank; line 26, *feither of a croe*—a crow's feather.

Page 121, line 4, [*maye*].—This word is inserted from MS. H.; line 18, *to seithe*—to boil; line 20, *greete*—grit; line 22, *hereife*—the plant hariff; line 23, *boyste*—(?); *tamde*—reduced; line 25, *saufe*—salve.

Page 122, line 5, *boune*—be obedient; line 23, *aleiche*—alike, equally; line 24, *livereye* — the quantity given or delivered to him for his day's sustenance; line 25, *piche*—perhaps for *pilche.*

Page 123, line 7, *in Blackon.* — MS. H. reads, *at Blackon;* line 10, *whotte*—hot; line 12, *jannacke*—oat-cake; line 14, *a grayne*—(?); line 20, *a gygges foote* — (?); *purye*—a kind of pottage; line 25, *secchel* — satchell, bag.

Page 124, line 2, *atamed*—reduced, tamed; line 6, *weete*—wet; line 7, *flagette* — flagon; *tame* — empty; line 8, *bibbe* — drinke; line 14, *call* — inserted from MS. H.: MS. A. has *blowe;* line 15, *bittlockes,* remnants (?); line 22, *mittinge*—(?)

Page 125, line 2, *lowde*—probably an error for *sounde;* line 6, *woulde*—wold, forest; line 14, *tarre boyste and tarre boyle*—(?); line 30, *the devill of the sope*—perhaps a corruption of *the devil have the sop;* line 31, *I sette* —MS. A. reads, *Ile sette.*

Page 126, line 1, *teene* — heed; line 2, *touginge* — tugging; line 6, *lyverastes* — (?); line 10, *hape* — hap; line 11, *sitte.* — MS. H. reads, *flett: in freye* is evidently a mistake for *in fere;* line 18, *stopped*—steeped; MS. A. reads, *stamped;* line 27, *pynckes*—(?)

Page 127, line 11, *tighte*—promised.

Page 128, line 2, *golions glette* — (?); line 4, *in meideste Dde the were drente.*—In the middle of the Dee they were drowned; line 12, *walte* — roll down; line 15, *bone* — a boon; line 18, *gloe thee to greynes* — (?); line 20, *drownes*—drones; line 21, *leither tycke*—wicked dog.

Page 129, line 4, *to-fore*—before; line 6, *boverte*—(?); line 10, *leither in the lacke.* — MS. H. reads, *leither in the lake:* line 11, *lache* — take, snatch; line 15, *ataynte of your tache*—attainted of your crime (?); line 26, *wedder*—weather.

Page 130, line 6, *beyrde*—beard; line 16, *leminge* — shining; line 17, *lettes*—hinders.

Page 131, line 9, *glye on the glee* — (?); line 16, *our elderes Lorde* — the Lord of our forefathers; line 17, *lere*—teach: perhaps it should be *here;* line 19, *apente*—appertain, what it will concern.

Page 132, line 8, *desevere* — separate; line 13, *muttinge*—whispering: MS. H. has *mutinge;* line 19, *but*—without.

Page 133, line 4, *awreckinge me wened* (?)—MS. H. reads *awreakinge;* line 20, *or roo*—(?)

Page 134, line 3, *dafte*—foolish; line 9, *bletinge he borned*—(?); line 20, *a gone harre*—have gone higher.

Page 135, line 1, *loden*—for *leden*, language, particularly that of birds; line 3, *mutted*—whispered, or muttered; line 5, *quocke*—quaked; line 6, *heede*—head; line 10, *crape*—in MS. H. it appeared to be *trapp;* line 11, [*and*]—inserted from MS. H.; line 21, *let us to be kente*—hinder us from being ruined.

Page 136, line 14, *bonne the lymes*—MS. H. reads *boyne.*

Page 137, line 8, *to ken*—to show, make known; line 26, *many mans moe*—that of many a man more.

Page 138, line 8, *whore*—hoar; line 9, *a buske of breyers*—a bush of briars. This is a curious description of the manner in which Joseph was represented; line 12, *to nape*—to take a nap, to sleep. (?)

Page 139, line 16, *geyer*—geer; line 22, *tweyne*—separate, part; line 29, *icheone*—every one, each one.

Page 140, line 10, *a crebe*—a crib; line 14, *proffittes*—prophets; line 12, *loe, I bringe thee a bell.*—In the early printed French Mistere de la Conception, etc., there is a conversation among the shepherds relating to their offerings, which may be compared with what follows in our Chester Play:—

ALORIS.

A nostre propos revenir,
Nous n'avons point bien advisé
Par entre nous, et devisé
Quel present ne de quel façon
Nous ferons à cest enfançon,
Que n'avons encore cogneu.

Y[illegible]MBER.

Aloris, c'est bien [illegible]venu,
Il y fault penser e[illegible]esent.

PELI[illegible]

J'ay bien advisé quel present
Je luy feray qu'il sera digne.

RIFFLART.

Quel present esse?

PELION.

Or divine,
Et tu orras bonne sornette.

RIFFLART.

Tu luy veulx donner ta houlette,
Ou ton beau chapelet troué,
Qui est sur ta teste encroué.
Pelion, j'entens par cueur ton cas.

PELYON.

Ma foy, non fais, tu n'y es pas.
Ma houlette m'est trop propice,
Sans elle n'est rien que je fisse.
Mais encor si la desiroit,
Je me doubte bien qu'il auroit,
Tant est bien mon petit cousin.

RIFFLART.

Luy donras-tu ton chien?

PELION.

Nenny.
Qui retourneroit mes brebis?

RIFFLART.
Luy donneras-tu pain bis?
PELION.
Nenny.
RIFFLART.
Luy donneras-tu du let?
PELION.
Bref il aura mon flagolet,
Tout neuf, il n'est pas de refus.
Onc puis en Betheleem ne fus,
Que à ung de ces petis merciers
Il me cousta deux bons deniers,
Se sera pour l'enfant esbatre;
Homme n'y a qui l'eust pour quatre.
Mais neantnoins, et fust il plus riche,
Il aura.
ALORIS.
Le don n'est pas nice,
Mais est digne de grant guerdon.
YSAMBERT.
J'ay advisé ung autre don,
Qui est gorgias et doulcet.
RIFFLART.
Mon amy, qu'esse?
YSAMBERT.
Mon hochet,
Si tresbien faict que c'est merveilles,
Qui dira clir clir aux aureilles.
Aumoins quant l'enfant plorera,
Le hochet le rapaisera,
Et se taira sans faire pose.
ALORIS.
Je luy donray bien autre chose:
J'ay ung beau kalendrier de boys,
Pour scavoir les jours et les moys,
Et cognoistre le nouveau temps.
Il n'y en a, comme j'entens,
Si juste au monde qu'il est,
Chascun sainct a son marmouret
Escript de lettre pour jonger,
Mais quelle lettre de berger.
Cela luy sera advantage:
Aumoins quant il viendra sur l'aage,
Il aprendra à les scavoir.
RIFFLART.
C'est ung don qui vault grant avoir,
Et fust pour donner à ung conte.
Mais j'ay par moy fait mon compte
De luy donner une sonnette,
Qui est pendue à ma cornette
Depuis le temps Robin fouette;
Puis une belle pirouette,
Qui est dedans ma gibeciere.
Il n'y a berger ni bergiere
En ce monde, qui sceust finer
D'ung plus beau don pour l'estrener,
Ne de plus grant nouvelleté.
PELION.
Or sommes nous en la cité
De Betheleem, la mercy Dieu!
N'y a que querir le lieu
Où l'enfant et la mere sont.

It is probable that these early printed French Mysteries were taken from older manuscripts. One of the names of the shepherds in the foregoing extract (RIFFLART) is found in the corresponding scene, among the older manuscript Mysteries, edited by M. Jubinal.

Page 141, line 10, *froo*—perhaps an error of the scribe for *foo;* line 13, *yeairth*—earth; line 24, *dremes*—joys (?); MS. H. reads *jewells.*

Page 142, line 11, BOYE—MS. A. reads PLAYE; line 16, *fayer* is inserted from MS. H.

Page 143, line 2, *then*—MS. A. reads *that;* line 8, *rockes or in*—(?)

line 23, *of mighteste moste* — an error of the scribe for *of mightes most*, most of power; line 25, *coste*—region.

Page 144, line 2, *whomwardes* — homewards; line 8, *henge* — perhaps for *hence ;* line 14, *betake* — give, dedicate ; line 17, *ancker*—anachorite, hermit.

Page 145, line 3, *eylde* — yield (?) : MS. H. reads *yeilde ;* line 8, *not*—know not, for *ne wot :* line 9, *bouth framed and couth*—both strange and known ; line 15, *iche frende*—each friend.

Page 146, The Three Kings.—This and the next play make but one in the other collections of Mysteries. It is the subject of one of the Latin mysteries of the twelfth century, published in my Early Mysteries and other Latin Poems, 8vo., London, 1838. There is a long mystery or *geu* (play), Des Trois Reis, in the French Collection of Mysteries edited by M. Jubinal, vol. ii. page 79, which has a prologue describing the plot of the play in the same manner as some of the ancient comedies, and as some dramatic pieces of a later date. This French play has some points of comparison with our two Chester plays. In the Towneley and Coventry Mysteries, the plays of the Adoration of the Magi commence with a ranting speech of King Herod ; one of those which gave rise to Shakespeare's saying of "out-Heroding Herod." In this respect, as in many others, the Chester Mysteries bear a much closer resemblance to the different collections of French Mysteries than any of the other English collections. It may be observed that this exalted language of King Herod was of old standing: in the Latin Mystery above alluded to, while the other characters discourse in Monkish rhymes, Herod talks in fine hexameters, generally made up from Virgil and old writers. The legend of The Three Kings, commonly described as the three kings of Cologne, as that city was believed to have been their final resting-place, was extremely popular in the Middle Ages ; and I have thought it would not be considered inappropriate to give the English version at the end of the notes to the present volume, to which therefore I refer for further illustrations.

Page 146, line 9, *Iwysse*—an error of the press for *i-wisse*; line 13 [*in*]. —This word is added from MS. H.

Page 146, line 14, *in this mounte make our prayer.*—This is an allusion to one part of the legend of the three kings. The Cursor Mundi, MS. Cotton., Vespas. A III., fol. 63, ro. gives this incident on the authority of St. John Chrysostom, who is there called John Goldenmouth :—

John Gildenmoth sais wit wisdome
That he fand in a nald bok,
This kinges thre thar wai thai tok
A tuelmoth ar the nativité,
For elles moght not kinges thre
Haf raght to ride sa ferr ewai,
And com to Crist that ilk dai.
He sais that in the bok he fand

Of a prophet of Estrinland
Hight Balaam, crafti and bald,
And mikel of a stern he tald,
A sterne to cum that suld be sene,
Was never nan suilk befor sua scene.
Us telles alsua John Gildenmoth
Of a folk ferr and first uncuth,
Wonnand be the est occean,
That biyond tham ar wonnand nan.
Amangs quilk was broght a writte,
O Seth the name was laid on it:
O suilk a stern the writt it spak,
And of thir offerands to mak.
This writte was gett fra kin to kin,
That best it cuth to haf in min,
That at the last thai ordeind tuelve
The thoghtfulest amang tham selve,
And did tham in a montain dern
Desselic to wait the stern:
Quen ani deid o that dozein,
His sun for him was sett again
Or his neist that was fere,
Sua that ever than ilk yere
Quen thair corns war in don,
Thai went into that mountaine son,
Thar thai offerd, praid, and suank,
Thre dais nother ete ne dranc.
This thoru ilk oxspring thai did,
Til at the last this stern it kyd,
This ilk stern tham come to warn
Apon that mont in forme o barn,
And bar on it liknes of croice,
And said to thaim wit mans woice,
That thai suld wend to Juen land.

Page 146, line 17, *Bethlems*—evidently a mistake of the scribe for *Balaams;* line 19, *woode*—mad.

Page 147, line 4, *his kinde*—of his kindred, or family.

Page 149, line 3, *witterlye*—truly.

Page 150, line 1, *theider*—thither; line 2, *bedden*—bidden, ordered; line 5, *every eichone*—each, every one; line 18, *i-wente*—gone; line 19, *glente*—slipped or snatched away.

Page 150, line 6, *drombodaries.* The following account of the dromedary is given in Trevisa's version of Bartholomeus de Proprietatibus Rerum, lib. xviii., c. 26. "Dromedus is a beest of the maner kynde of a camell, as Isydore sayth, libro. xij°. and sayth that Dromedus is a manere kynde of camell, and lasse in stature than a camell, and is moche swyfter of cours and rennyng, and hath therfore the name Dromedus for swyfte rennynge, whyche hyghte Dromos in Grewe. And the Dromedus gooth an hundred myles and twenty and more in one daye."

Page 151, line 3, *belamye*—fair friend, (French); line 12, *wyn*—joy; line 15, *woode,* mad; line 19, *wonnes*—dwells.

Page 152, line 22, *unfayne*—unglad, sorrowful.

Page 153, line 4, *appeartlye*—openly; line 10, *unbuxsome*—disobedient; line 11, *bydeene*—immediately; line 25, *nye*—injury; line 27, *freke*—fellow; line 28, *nill*—for *ne will,* will not.

Page 154, line 3, *grome*—a man, lad, fellow; line 11, *reconned*—reckoned (?); line 27, *maungere*—for *maugre,* in spite of.

Page 155, line 21, *to coulde*—to chill, to make cold.

Page 156, line 3, *but searche the truth of Esaii.* What follows here forms in other collections the play of the Prophets. In the Towneley Mysteries the *Processus Prophetarum* is incomplete. In the play of the Prophets in the Coventry Mysteries, most of the names mentioned here, with some others, are introduced. "The Prophets" forms also the second part of the early Latin Mysterium Fatuarum Virginum, printed in my "Early Mysteries, and other Latin Poems."

Page 156, line 11, *non auferetur*—Genesis, c. xlix., v. 10.

Page 156, line 28, *Messie*—Messiah; line 30, *vylarde*—old man; *doted*—in his dotage.

Page 157, line 2, *parage*—peerage, rank; line 20, *doterdes*—dotards.

Page 158, line 6, *Ambulabunt gentes*—Isa., c. lx., v. 3.

Page 158, line 21, *congion*—dwarf, wretch; line 28, *wreeke my teene*—wreak my anger; line 29, *harlote*—a person of low character, applied commonly to the male sex; *sorde*—a sword.

Page 159, line 1, *Reges Tharsis*—Psal. lxxi., v. 10.

Page 160, line 1, *all gates*—all ways, at all events; line 17, *I wysse*—an error of the press for *i-wysse.*

Page 160, margin, *the boye and pigge.* This appears to be an allusion to some popular exhibition which took place between the plays.

Page 161, line 2, *tacke*—taken; line 3, *fayne*—glad; line 6, *sweayne*—swain, lad; line 10, *rocked reball*—wicked (?) ribald.

Page 162, line 5, *layne*—deny: MS. H. reads *leane*; line 7, *gayne*—willing; line 12, *forwarde*—promise, covenant.

Page 163, line 11, *storred*—stirred; line 12, *glente*—glided away, vanished; line 13, *wonnes*—dwells; line 14, *apeartlye*—openly.

Page 164, line 1, *in*—evidently an error for *is;* line 22, *dieatie*—MS. H. reads *dietie;* line 27, *precialitie*—preciousness (?): MS. A. reads *pacialitie,* and H. 2124 *temporaltye.*

Page 165, line 17, *to balmbe his thoo*—to embalm his body (?): MS. H. 2124 reads *hym* for *his,* which is perhaps the more correct.

Page 165, line 19, *these geiftes three.* In the Cursor Mundi, MS. Cotton Vespas. A. III., fol. 63, vo., we find the following similar explanation of the three offerings:—

Ute over that hus than stod the stern,
Thar Jhesus and his moder wern.
Thai kneld dun and broght in hand,
Ilkan him gaf worthi offrand.
The first o tham, that Jasper hight,
He gaf him gold, wit resun right,
An that was for to scen takning
O kynges all that he was kyng.
Melchior him com thair neist,
Heid he was bath godd and prist,
Wit recles forwit him he fell,
That agh he brint in kirc to smell,
It es a gim that cums o firr.
Bot Attropa gaf gift o mir,

A smerl o selcuth bitturnes, For roting es na better rede,
That dedman cors wit smerld es: In taken he man was suld be dede.

Page 167, line 12, *mankinde of ball for to for-bye*—to redeem man from ruin; line 26, [*thou*] — this word is inserted from MS. H.; line 28, *wayle* —weal, prosperity.

Page 168, line 19, *to hanse* — to enhance, to raise in estimation; line 27, *to balme*—to embalm.

Page 169, line 5, *eylde*—yield, return; line 9, *faye*—faith; line 15, *intyre*—entire; line 21, *menskye*—courtesy; line 23, *strynte* — stock, breed, the act of begetting: this and the three following lines are omitted in MS. H.; line 24, *by leffe of kinde*—by natural love; line 27, *betacken*—given, delivered to; line 29, *postie*—power.

Page 171, line 6, *jasane* — lying-in, child-birth; line 20, *trayne* — injury (?)

Page 172, THE SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS. This was a very popular subject. It is found among the Early Latin Mysteries before alluded to. It forms part of the Geu des trois Roys, among the French Mysteries edited by M. Jubinal. It forms also an important portion of the old printed Mistere de la Conception, Nativité, &c., of which an extract has already been given in the present notes, and in which we have the same coarse dispute between the women and the knights that distinguishes the English Mysteries on this subject. The Slaughter of the Innocents forms the concluding part of the Coventry play edited by Mr. Sharp, in his Dissertation on the Pageants. There is a separate English play on the subject in a manuscript in the Bodleian Library, which is printed in Hawkins' History of the Stage, in which the humour is heightened by the introduction of a cowardly officer, who is beaten by the women. In the Towneley Mysteries the play of the Slaughter of the Innocents is entitled *Magnus Herodes*, as being the piece in which he swaggers most. The quarrel and fight between the knights and the women are not found in the play on the same subject among the Coventry Mysteries.

Page 172, line 2, *balmer and byse*—(?): MS. H. and H. 2124 read *blamner and bysse*; line 15, *marye*—in spite of, for *maugree*; line 17, *beheighte*—promised.

Page 173, line 10, *ricked reballe*—see before p. 161; line 22, *beare*—messuage; line 31, *yf*—apparently an error for *that.*

Page 174, line 4, *Lancler*—MS. H. reads *Launclet*; line 7, *to swaine*—to swoon, to faint.

Page 175, line 2, *a gaye garmente.*—An allusion to the custom among the princes and barons of the middle ages to give articles of dress as rewards to their ministers and dependents.

Page 175, line 7, *Lanscler*—MS. H. reads *Launder*; line 12, *keison*—probably an error of the scribe for *keiser*.

Page 176, line 28, *litter*—for *leither*, or *lither*, bad, wicked.

Page 177, line 2, *borne*—burn; line 6, *belive*—immediately; *wreche my teene*—wreak my anger; line 8, *and*—used in the sense of *if*; line 29, *leffe*—dear; line 30, *wrecke us as we mone*—avenge us as we may.

Page 177, line 26, *a lade.*—The Harl. MS., No. 2124, reads, apparently more correctly, *A lad might his head of hew.* In line 179, and several other instances, the same MS. reads properly, *knightes* instead of *kinges*, and in the last line of the page it has *wreake you if we mone.*

Page 177, line 27, *riballes are not in this row.*—The same expression is found in a song of the reign of Edward I., Political Songs, p. 155—

to shewe
That heo be kud ant knewe
For strompet in *rybaudes rewe.*

Page 178, line 20, *stall*—wretch (?)

Page 179, line 1, *be raye*—MS. H. reads *to raye:* and MS. Harl. 2124 has *rewkes rich you to araye*; line 2, *barro*—borough.

Page 179, line 4, *congion.* — In MS. Harl. 2124 this line is followed by some lines not in the other MSS.—

If any blabb-lipped boyes be in my way,
They shall rue it, by mightie Mahowne!
Though all the world wold say naye,
I my selfe shall ding them all downe.
If you will wot what I height,
My name is sir Waradrake the knight;
Against me dare no man feight,
My dentes they so dreede.
But fayne wold I fight my fill,
As fayne as fawcon wold flye,
My lord to wreake at his will,
And make those dogges for to dye.

Page 179, line 12, *searche*—MS. Harl. 2124 reads *scathe.*

Page 179, line 13, *therfore*—this and the two following lines are omitted in H.

Page 179, line 16, *on everyeiche.* — In MS. Harl. 2124 we find inserted here the following lines not in the other MSS.—

And I also, without bost,
Though the kinge of Scotes and all his host
Were here, I set not by their best,
To dryve them downe bydeene.
I slue ten thowsand upon a day
Of kempes in their best aray:
There was not one escaped away,
My sword it was so keene.
Therfore to me you take good keepe,
My name is Sir Grymball Launcher deepe;
They that me teenen I lay to slepe
On everych a side.
I slew of kempes, I understand,
More then a hundred thousand,
Both on water and on land,
No man dare me abyde.

Page 179, line 21, *geldinge* — a corrupt orthography of *gadling*; line 28, *yt is not my manere.* — Instead of this line, MS. H. reads *and I cane fynde him out*, and omits the four lines which follow; line 31, *afraye* — a mistake of the scribe for *asaye.*

Page 179 line 15, *I laie to slepe*—i.e. I kill. This is the Anglo-Saxon poetical phrase. Thus in the well-known song on the battle of Brunanburh—

Fife lægon	Five lay
on tham camp-stede,	on the field of battle,
cyningas geonge,	young kings,
sweordum aswefede.	laid to sleep with swords.

And in Beowulf, line 1126—

Be ydh-láfe	Upon the strand
uppe lægon	They lay,
sweordum aswefede.	laid to sleep with swords.

Page 180, line 5, *in a were*—in a doubt; line 6, *solingere*—perhaps for *losengere*, a traitor, deceiver; line 12, *also*—there should be a comma after this word; line 26, *must flitte*—must remove: in the north the word is still used to signify a change of residence. So in the Cursor Mundi, MS. Cotton, Vespas. A III., fol. 69, ro.—

Sithen thar noght lang thai bade,
Bot to Bethleem thair *flitting* made.

Page 181, line 1, *tell we hitte* — till we arrive; line 15, *haste downe.*— MS. Harl. 2124 reads *Hase done, fellowes, hies faste*, i.e., have done, fellows, hie fast; line 16, *queines*—women, used here apparently in a vulgar sense; line 22, PRIMUZ MULIER. — In this and the following pages, I have preserved the error of the MS. in combining the adjective in the masculine with a feminine noun; line 24, *daster* — (?) MS. Harl. No. 2124 reads here, *Thy dame thy drister was never such,* | *she burned a kelne eache stich*; line 25, *borned*—gave birth to (?).

Page 181, line 11, *for Mahometes.*—The incident of the falling down of the idols in Egypt, on the arrival of Mary and the infant Jesus, is taken from the apocryphal Gospel of the Infancy. It is introduced in the printed French Mistere de la Conception, &c. The following account of this pretended event occurs in the Cursor Mundi, MS. Cotton. Vespas. A. III., fol 65, ro.—

Als thai togedir talked sua,
Thai loked tham on ferrum fra,
And sun began thai for to see
O lond of Egypt sum cite.
Than thai wex full glad and blith,
And come tham till a cite suith,
Thar thai fand nan o thair knaing,
At that thai cuth ask at thair gesting.
In that si quar thai come to tun,
Was preistes at thair temple bun
To do the folk, als thai war sete,
Ma sacrifies to thair maumet,

Bot Maria ner was gesten thar;
To se that kirck hir sun sco bar,
Quen sco was cummen that kirck witin,
Man moght a selcuth se to min,
That al thair idels in a stund
Grovelings fel unto the grund,
Dun at the erth all war thai laid.
Than come the propheci was said,
Quen he, it sais, the laverd sal
Cum til Egypte, thair idels all
Sal fall dun als thai war noght,
The quilk thai wit thair handes wroght.

Page 182, line 8, *areiste*—arrest.

Page 182, line 12.—In MS. Harl. 2124 the second woman is here introduced with the following speech:—

Secunda mulier.

Say, rotten hunter, with thy goade,
Stibbon stallon stickt tode,
I red that thou no wronge us bode,
Lest thou beaten be.
Wherto sholde we lenger fode,
Lay we on them large loade;
Their basenetes be big and broad,
Beates on, now letes see.

Page 182, line 21, *teiffe*—thief; line 22, *my life*—these words are omitted in MS. H.

Page 183, line 1, *wrocken*—revenged; line 6, *snell*—quickly; line 7, *quaile*—kill; line 10, *preffe*—proof; line 11, *greffe*—grief, hurt; line 19, *thou shalt be hanged, &c.*—this and the eleven lines which follow are omitted in MS. H.

Page 184, line 2, *hoope*—hop.

Page 184, line 8, *assaie.*—In MS. Harl. 2124 the following lines are here inserted:—

Be thou so hardy, stockt tode,
To bydd eny wrong bode,
For all thy spear or thy goade,
I redd you doe but good.

Page 184, line 9, *For and thou*—this and the three following lines are omitted in MS. H.; line 12, *wood*—mad; line 18, *tacken*—given, delivered; line 22, *drye*—suffer, bear.

Page 184, line 21, *the kinges sonne.*—The circumstance of Herod having lost his own son in this massacre is told on the authority of Macrobius, Saturnal, lib. ii., c. 4. Cum audisset [Augustus] inter pueros quos in Syria Herodes rex Judærum intra bimatum jussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum, ait, Melius est Herodis porcum esse quam filium.

Page 185, line 2, *toke*—gave, delivered; line 4, *here the bene*—here they are; line 5, *pyne*—punishment: line 14, *thrighte*—thrust; line 28, *bottles*—without remedy.

Page 185, line 27, *I wotte I muste dye sone.*—This part of the Mysteries generally closes with Herod's sudden disorder and death. The author of the English Cursor Mundi (MS. Cotton. Vespas. A. III., fol. 65, vo.) gives the following graphic but fearful description of Herod's last end:—

This Herods had regned thrtee yere,
Quen Jhesus Crist ur lavedi bere;
Sithen he regned yeres seven;
His wranges Godd on him sal heven,
That fals, that fell, that Godds faa,
That soght his laverd for to sla,
Hu had he hert to sced thair blod
That never did til him bot godd?
That wili wolf, that fox sa fals,
Bath gam fremd and freinds als,
O carles costes al til unknauin,
And was man queller til his aun.
That gredi gerard als a gripe
His unrightes beginnes to ripe,
And of his servis mani dai,
Nu neghes tim to tak his lai;
That caitif unmeth and unmeke
Nu begines he to seke;
The parlesi has his a side,
That dos him fast to pok his pride;
In his heved he has the scall,
The scab overgas his bodi all;
In his sides him held the thring,
His folk sagh soru on thair king.
Wit the crache him tok the scurf,
The fester thrild his bodi thurgh;
The gutte, the potagre es il to bete,
It fell al dun intil his fete.
Over al than was he mesel plain,
And tharwit had fever quartain.
Ydropsi held him sua in threst,
That him thoght his bodi suld brest.
The falland gute he had o mell,
His teth ut of his heved fell.
On ilk side him soght the sare,
It moght naman in liif ha mare,
Over al wrang ute worsum and ware,
And wormes creul'd here and thare.
Als caitif thare he ligges seke,
And dos him leches for to seke;
And thai com bath fra ferr and ner,
That sliest war o that mister,
Bot for thai moght not leche his wa,
All he did tham for to sla.
His aun geing all fledd him fra,
Bath servands and sun alssua:
His freindes all thai him fra fledd,
Moght nan for stinck negh til his bedd,
All thai fled fra him awai,
And isked efter his end-dai.
Quen that his sun Archelaus
Sagh his soruful fader thus,
Til the barnage tit he sent,
To make a prive parlment.
Godd men, he said, quat es your sight
O mi fader that thus es dight
Yee se he has na mans taill,
Tharfor yee sai me your counsaill:
He es sua stad witin his wai,
That sagh I never nanother sua;
The roting that him rennes ute,
The stinck that ai es him abute,
Ne mai na liveand man it thole,
And tharwit he dos his leche cole.
Quat sum he self dos he ne wat,
For he es in a soruful state,
For he es ute of his witt for wa.
For-thi rede I, if you thinc sua,
That we ger get us leches tuin,
In quilk we mai siker us in,
To mak a neu bath to prove,
O pike and oile to his behove,
And quen that it has had an hete,
Cast him tharin al for to suete.
The barnage said, God es thi rede,
For almis war that he war dede.
This leches did thai sun forth bring;
Quen thai come before the king,
He lifted up his lathli ching,
And felunlik can on thaim grene:
Fiz-à-putains, he said, quat er yee?
Sir, lechis for to leche ye:

Medicine sal you of us take,
A nobul bath we sal ye make,
That bi that you tharof cum ute,
You sal be halesum ani trute.
Thai fild a lede o pik and oyle,
And fast thai did it for to boile.
Quen it was to thair will al dighte,
Thai lifted up that maledight.
Aha! traiturs! he said, I sale
Hing yow bot ye mak me hale.
Nai goddut, thai said, sir king,
Sal you never naman hing,
Bi that we ani fra other part,
Bot if we fail nu of ur art.
Wit this thai lite his heud dun,
And up the fete o that felun,
For thai haf halden him thair haite,
Tharin thai hang him be the fete,
And drund him in pike and terr,
And send him quar he farris werr,
Werr than he fard ever ar,
Thar never esend apon his sar;
For he es bileft wit Satanas,
And wit the traitar sir Judas.
Quen he was ded, that gerard grim,
Archelaus was king efter him.

Page 188, line 2, *tyde*—time; line 4, *boote*—remedy, consolation.

Page 189, THE PURIFICATION.—In the Coventry and Towneley Mysteries, the Purification and the Disputation with the Doctors (called in the latter collection *Pagina Doctorum*) form separate plays. None of the pieces on this subject contain the incident of the erasing of the words from the book of prophecy by Simeon, nor do I know whence it is taken.

Page 189, line 8, *swene*—(?): MS. H. reads *sweyne*, and H. 2124 *swem*; line 13, *but*—without.

Page 190, line 8, *a deale*—a portion, a bit; line 11, *fone*—(?) a fool; line 20, *boote*—remedy, salvation.

Page 191, line 24, *kinde*—nature.

Page 192, line 15, *leeve*—believe; line 16, *baron*—probably for *barne*, a child; line 31, *for-bye*—redeem.

Page 193, line 9, *owine fere*—own companion; line 10, *rede*—advise, counsel; line 23, *turckell*—MS. A. reads *tortle*: this incident is found in the apocryphal gospels.

Page 194, line 7, *thoe*—then; line 25, *tighte*—promised.

Page 195, line 1, *lee*—joy; line 4, *postie*—power; line 6, *lighteninge*—light, *illuminatio*; line 11, *fone*—foe; line 17, *trow*—believe; line 18, *thrawe*—an agony, throe.

Page 196, line 21, *whome-warde*—homeward; line 22, *growne and greiffe*—probably for *grame and greffe*, affliction and grief.

Page 197, line 9, *bourdinge*—jesting; line 12, *cleargye*—science, learning; line 13, *fayne*—gladly; line 22, *leche*—physician.

Page 198, line 6, *well*—MS. A. reads *will*; line 9, *welde*—to rule, possess; line 13, *hope*—expect.

Page 200, line 2, *my travile teene*—lose my labour; line 3, *melle*—meddle, mix.

Page 201, The Temptation, and the Woman taken in Adultery. — These two subjects are not treated in the Towneley Mysteries, which here, after a play of John the Baptist, or the Baptism of Christ, goes on abruptly to the Capture and Judgment. In the Coventry Mysteries, the Disputation in the Temple is followed by the play of the Baptism, and the Temptation and Woman taken in Adultery form two plays, the latter of which contains some droll incidents calculated to amuse the audience.

Page 201, line 1, [*my*] — this word is inserted from MS. H; line 4, *a gamon*—a game; line 5, *a dossiberde*—a fine fellow, literally, one of the *douze-paires; dere*—to injure; line 13, *this*—MS. A. reads *his;* line 14, *countise*—queintise, art, cunning.

Page 202, line 3, *hasse hym honer yore*—his people have honoured him formerly; line 7, *wembles*—perhaps for *it is wemless,* it is without spot; line 10, *blottles*—without blot.

Page 203, line 9, *pynes*—painest, givest thyself pain; line 14, *postie*—power; line 20, *boute fayle*—without fail.

Page 204, line 8, *doscibeirde*—see before, p. 201; line 12, *balle*—evil, woe; line 19, *seache*—for *search;* line 31, *maisterye*—an act of skill or power.

Page 206, line 1, *thro*—eager, bold. MS. H. 2124 reads, *though I to threpe be never so thro, | I am overcome thrye;* line 4, *founded*—tempted; line 7, *sutte* — set: or perhaps a misreading of the scribe for *fette;* line 13, *to-rente*—torn to pieces, very much torn; line 33, *boute moe*—without more.

Page 206, line 14.—MS. H. 2124 reads, *And dryven all to dyrt,* and, in place of the twelve lines which follow in our text, concludes the devil's speech with these four:—

Therfore is nowe myne intent,
Or I goe, to make my testament,
To all that in this place be lent
I bequeath the shitte. *Exit.*

Page 207, line 11, *heighte*—promised; line 22, *his read*—his advice, his counsel; line 25, *a were*—a doubt, or difficulty.

Page 208, line 22, *his owine lore*—his own teaching or doctrine.

Page 209, line 2, *meane* — apply, appeal (?): line 2, *dome* — judgment; line 6, *bout synne* — without sin; *buske* — hasten; line 8, *belive* — immediately; *blyne*—stop, delay.

Page 209, line 14, *what wrytteste thou?* — It was a common article of popular religious belief in the middle ages that Jesus wrote on the ground the secret sins of the woman's accusers, which caused them to drop their accusation and run away. It is alluded to in the interesting poem of Piers Ploughman, l. 7588.

For Moyses witnesseth that God wroot
For to wisse the peple
In the olde lawe, as the lettre telleth,
That was the lawe of Jewes,
That what womman were in avoutrye taken,
Were she riche or poore,
With stones men sholde hir strike,
And stone hire to dethe.
  A womman, as I fynde,
Was gilty of that dede.
Ac Crist of his curteisie
Thorugh clergie hir saved;
And thorugh caractes that Crist wroot,
The Jewes knewe hemselve
Giltier as a-fore God,
And gretter in synne,
Than the womman that there was,
And wenten awey for shame.

Page 210, line 9, *the bene*—they are.

Page 211, line 7, *the hopen witterlye*—they hope or expect truly.

Page 212, LAZARUS.—The Miracle of Lazarus is found in Latin among my Early Latin Mysteries. In the Towneley Mysteries it is given as a supplementary piece at the end. In the Coventry Mysteries it occupies the same place as here.

Page 213, line 26, CECUS. — The MSS. read in every instance CACUS; line 29, *or I goe*—before I go.

Page 220, line 7, *leither swayne*—wicked fellow; line 8, *onste*—once; line 11, *thee*—thrive; line 25, [*saye*].—This word is inserted from MS. H.

Page 222, line 5, *withouten wene* — without doubt; line 8, *the gone* — they goe; line 10, *for the nones*— for once, for the occasion.

Page 223, line 10, *souther*—truer; line 18, *a tacken*—have given (?), or perhaps *atacken*, attack; line 19, *to-clapped*—knocked him to pieces, or struck him hard.

Page 224, line 1, *no force*—no matter; line 2, *taberte*— tabart, or coat; line 5, *yode*—went; line 9, *throe*—bold, eager.

Page 225, line 7, *teene*—grief; line 9, *wake*—watch.

Page 228, line 6, *wonne*—dwell; line 7, *boote*—remedy, salvation; line 18, *lere*—countenance, complexion; line 19, *lyne*—lye.

Page 229, line 13, *frecke*—fellow; *to reme and yole*—to cry and howl; line 14, *gole*—(?) a fool. MS. H. 2124 reads *for a gole*.

Page 230, line 25, *be thou owe*—thou oughtest to be.

THE LEGEND OF THE THREE KINGS OF COLOGNE.

[MS. HARL., 1704, fol. 49. ,vo.]

Hereth of these iij. worshipfull and glorious kynges: in all the world, frome the arysyng of the sonne to the downe going, is full praysyng of theyre merites; and as be the arysyng of the sonne beames the world clereth, so the world shyneth by the merites of theis iij. kynges, in springing and arysyng of the sonne, that is to say, on the est part of the world. Knowlage ye thanne, that they in body and flessh levyng, sought and worshipped Crist, verrey God and man, wyth her yeftes that were bodyliche and in menyng gostlich. And thus these iij. kynges were made of misscreauntis gentiles, the fyrst of byleve in the byrth of Crist, verrey sone, frist shewed and halowed by thenne to myssbylevyng men. And in goyng downe of the sone of Crist Jhesu, by sufferyng deth, in the bylevyng of these iij. kynges, as a shynyng morowtide betokeneth a clere weddyr folowing. And in like wyse by the going downe of the sonne, these iij. kyngis, when they were dede, with her relikis and miracles in mony maners shewed and expressed oure byleve. But for as moch as what these iij. kyngis wrought in the byrth of the sonne of Crist, in dyverse places and bokes is oft writen and opened; but what they deden afterward to mony men is unknowen; therefore, after heryng, sight, and speche of clerkes and oure fornefaders, to the worship of God, and of oure lady Seint Mary, and of these iij. blessid kynges, be here in thus Tretis writen diverse bokes and compiled in one.

The mater of these iij. blessid kyngis toke bygynnyng of the prophecie of Balaham, the prest of Madian, profete, the which Balaham among alle other thinges prophecied and saide, *Orietur stella ex Jacob, et exurget homo de Israel, et dominabitur omnium gentium.* This is to say, a ster shall spring of Jacob, and a man rise up of Israel, and schalbe lord of alle folke, as it is conseyved fulliche in the old testament. Of this Balaham is alternation in the Est bytwene the Jewes and the Cristen men; for Jewes say in her bokes that Balaham was no prophet, but an enchauntour, and through wichecraft and develes he prophecied; wherefore in writeng he shuld be clepid an enchauntour, and no prophet. Ayenst the Jewes the cristen men alegge and saye that Balaham was a prophet paynyme, and was the first prophet or than was ony Jewe, and prophecied to hem that were no Jewes, and right gloriously prophecied of the incarnacion of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and of the comyng of these iij. kyngis; for yef his prophecie had come through devels craft, they wold not have forbode hym to curse Israel. But God of his gret love shewed to Balaham by an angele, through tokenesse, to cese, or that he shuld greve God by his evell counseill. But as it is aforesaid that Balaham was the fyrst prophete, that was no Jewe, and prophecied to hem that were no Jewes, therefore the Jewes in her bokes clepid hym no prophete, but an enchauntour. Also, in her bokes is a question of Jobe, whome God with his owne mouth commendeth, of whome the Jewes right nought or litell taketh kepe of, sith he was a paynyme, and not of the Ebrewes. Ferthermore they saye Jobe was before Moyses lawe, and in that tyme he dwelled in Mesopotayne, notwithstondyng that the scripture saith that he was in the lond of Us in Serie, and dwelled in a towne that is clepid now Sabob, that is forme Damask ix. dayes jornaye, where his sepulture is sene unto his day; and beside the same towne Seint Poule was cast downe in the felde, and there converted to Crist. Also the Jewes kepe not of the prophecie of Balaham, ne of his wordys, but in here bokes set hym at nought, of the which it were long to telle or declare.

Thenne the children of Israel were goo oute of Egipt, and had wonne and made soget to hem Jerusalem and alle the lond ligging aboute, and no man was hardy in alle the contrey to set ayenst hem, for drede that they had of hem, than was ther an hille that was clepid Vaus, which hille also is nempnede the hille of victorie; and on this hille the warde and the kepyng of hem of Inde was ordeyned and kept by diverse espies by nyght and by day for the children of Israel, and afterward for the Romains; so that yf ony peple in eny tyme purposide with strong hond to enter into the contrey or the kyngdome of Inde, anon aspies of other hilles aboute, through tokenes, shewed and warned the kepers that were on the hille of Vaws, as by nyght they made a gret fyre, and by day they made a gret smoke: for that hille Vaws passeth all other hilles in that contrey of Inde and in alle the Est; and whan ony such token was sey by day or be nyght, than anonne alle maner men of the contrey made hem redy to ayenstonde yf ony enemyes had come. Wherefore in that tyme that Balaham so gloriouslich prophecied of the Incarnation of oure Lord Jhesu, and of the sterre saide *Orietur*, &c., as it is aforesaide, than alle the gret lordes and alle other peple in Inde and in the Est desyred gretly to see that sterre, and behete yftis to the kepers of this hille of Vaws, and moreover hyred hem with gret mede that yf ony sterre or light in the eyre or in the firmament other than was sene to-forne tyme or appered, anone they shuld shewe and sende hem worde. And so long tyme the comon fame and loos of this sterre was spoke and bore through all the londes of the Est. And of the name of this hill off Vaws aroos up a worshypfull and a gret kynrede in Inde and in the Est, the which is clepid the progenie of Vaws into this day; and ther is not a more worshipfull ne a more myghty kynrede in alle the landes and kyndomes of the Est, as it shalbe shewed. And this worshipfull kynrede came fyrst of the worshipfull kyngis blode that was clepid Melchior, that offrede gold to oure lord Jhesu Crist, as ye shall here afterwarde.

In the yere of our lord a m^{l}.cc. whan the cite of Acon, that in this contre is clepid Akres, florishede and stode in his vertue, joy, and prosperite, and was anherited richely with worshipfull princes and lordes, and with divers orders of men of religion, and of all maner of men of dyverse nations and tonges, in so moch that the name and the loos of that cite Acon was bore through the world, and moreover all nacions and tonges came theder and brought theder, both by lond and by water, alle maner marchaundise of the world, so that there was no cite like thereto of nobley and of myght, than for this gret name, and gret lose, and merveles that were there, the grettest of byrthe that were of this progenie of Vaws come oute of Inde into Acon. And for they seye alle thing more wonderfull than was in Inde and in the contre of the Est, thanne because of disporte abidd there, and made a faire and a strong castell in Acon for ony kyng or lord, and brought with them oute of Inde and of the Est mony rich and wonderfull ornamentis and jewell, and among alle other jewelles they brought a diademe of gold arrayed with precious stones and perellis, and on the highest place above stode letters of Caldee and a sterre made like the sterre that appered to the iij. kynges whiche sought God with a signe of the crois beside; and that diademe was Melchior the kyngis of Nube and of Arabie, that offerd gold to God as they sayne, for through that diademe and the merites of the iij. kyngis, God Almyghty savedde and heled both man and best of diverse turnamentis and infirmitees; and what man was take with foule evelle, whan the croune was laid uppon hym, anone he was hole. Whefore, afterwarde the maister and the order of the templers gat the same diademe of gold, with mony other preciousse jewelles and ornamentes, of the which croune they had late gret profite of offrynges; but after tyme that the order of templers was destroyed, than the dyademe and the other preciouse jewelles and ornamentis become after it was never knowe yet into this day; wherefore there was gret sorowe made in alle the countre long tyme after. Also the same princes of Vaws brought with them oute of Inde bokes writen in Ebrewe and Caldee of the lyfe and of the dedis of iij. blessid kynges, the which bokes were afterwarde translate into Frensch; and so in these bokes and of huryng and sight also of sermones and omelies that ben draw out of diverse bokes, is this boke wreten and gadered, and put into a boke. Also ye shalle understonde that the olde kynrede of the progenie of Vaws bereth in her baner into this day a sterre with a signe of the crois, made after the same maner and the same fourme as it appered to the iij. kynges in the tyme of the byrth of oure lord Jhesu Crist. And after Balaham had prophecied of this sterre, certeyne men were ordeyned to loke ther uppon the hill of Vaws, as it is aforesaide; the more that the sterre was loked after the more fame and loos encresid and was spoke of through the londe of Inde and Caldee, and alle the people desyred to see it.

Than Ezechias reigned kyng of the lond of Jewes, Ysaie the prophete gloriously prophecied of oure lady seint Marie, and of hyr son, and saide *Ecce virgo concipiet et pariet filium.* Lo, quod this prophet, a maide shall conseyve and bere a child. In this tyme of this Ysaie, kyng Ezechias was sike to the dethe, and Isaie in the name of God told and said to the kyng Ezechias that he shuld deye. Wherefore Ezechias turnyd hym to a wall, as holy writ saith, and wepte, and not for drede of deth onely, but for he had none eyre, and for the behest made to Abraham and also the prophecie of Balaham and of Ysaie shuld faile and perische in hym. Wherefore oure Lord Jhesu Crist had mercy on hym and encresid his lyffe lenger by xv. yere, and than Ezechias asked a token of God hereof, the which token was this: That the sonne shuld goo backewarde or withdrawe hym ayenst his kynde, and God suffred it that it shuld be so. And than Caldees, seing this wonderfull token in the sonne and in hevyn, they wondred gretly therof, and whan they herde that thys tokyn in the sonne was do for kyng Ezechias, than they sent to hym mony yftes and were in purpose and will to come and worship hym. But for the kyng Ezechias, of verrey innocencie of hert and dissimulation, wold not knowlige that this tokyne was for hym, and also for he wold not thanke God therof, but had a litylle pride in his hert therof, God was sum dele wroth ayenst hym, and sent to Ezechias the kyng by his prophete Ysaie, that alle the yftes that were sent to hym of the Caldees by her mesyngers shuld be bore into Babiloyne, as it is writen in the Bible. For though Ezechias was kyng of Jewes bore, and that wonderfull tokyn in the sonne was shewed for hym, yet he was not that man that shuld arise up of Israel and be lord of all folke, as Balaham prophecied. And ye shall understonde that the Caldees and the Grikis in that tyme yeff hem moche to astronomys, and had gret delite therin, in so much that every maide in a mannes hous knew the cours of the sterris and of the planettes, and yet alwey they yef hem therto bisilich, and specially kynges and princes, for they have maisters of that science, and yef hem gret wages to tech hem that cunnyng of astronomye.

After Ezechias reigned Manasses, that killed Ysaye the prophet, and after Manasses reigned Amon; and after hym reigned Josias; and in his time the ermite prophecied, and in the tyme of the ermite reigned Joachym, and in his tyme Naibegoddonosor and the Caldees beseged Jerusalem, and destroyed it, and bare away all the vesselx and the ornamentes that were in the temple of God and in the kynges hous, into Babiloyne, as Ysaie had prophecied before. Also he brought mony Jewes prisoners into Babiloyne, the which Babiloyne is fro Jerusalem l. dayes jornay; and ther they were in captivite and in prisone lxx. yere, to whom Theremie the prophet sent and yaffe bokes of the lawe of God and of prophetes, that they shuld not be foryete, as the Bible witnesseth; and in this captivite of Jewes, Daniell prophecied under Tyrus, that was kyng of Pers, of the incarnation of oure lord Jhesu Crist, whan he spake *De lapide absciso de monte sine manibus concidentium,* as ye shull here after; and among alle other Danyell to the Jewes saide, *Cum venerit sanctus sanctorum cessabit unctio vestra*; that is to say, whan he that is most holiest of seinttes cometh, than shall youre unccion sease. Aftyr this, Tyrus kyng of Pers and the Caldees commaunded and did write and translate oute of Ebrewe into Caldee alle the bokes of the Jewes and of the prophecie of Ysaie theremithe, Theremie, Daniell, and Balaham, and all other prophecies; and among alle thes bokis and prophecies specially that mony thingis shuld be fulfilled by the Caldees and of hem of Pers, after the prophecies, and specially after the prophecie of Balaham that saide *Orietur stella,* as it is aforesaide. And for these prophecies, and the bokes of Jewes, and for other causes, the Caldees and they of Pers were more fervent and stodying after this sterre, whereby we schall understond that alle this was do of Goddis ordinaunce, and of his mercy, and also to the strengh of oure faith of Balaham, the fyrst prophete, that was no Jewe, by a sterre prophecied the fyrste clepyng of hem that were none Jewes, whan he saide *Orietur stella,* &c.; and this clepyng of the peple God Almighty fyrste beganne and perfourmed by his birth, and by these gloriouse kyngis; and though they of Pers and of Caldee were paynymes, yet by thes prophecies, and by these bokes of the Jewes, they founde welle and wist wele that whatever God had byhote, by his prophetes he was mighty to fulfill and to perfourme it. So they ordeyned xij. of the wisest men and of the grettest clerkys of astronomye that were in alle the contrey aboute, and yaffe hem gret wages to kepe this hille of Vaws aforesaide, for this sterre that was prophecied by Balaham. And the cause that they ordeyned xij. men, as it is aforesaide, was this, that yf it so were that one man died, another shuld be put into his stede; and also another cause ther was that sume of hem shuld kepe that hille and loke after the sterre that one tyme, and sum at another tyme. Nevertheless, the peple loked not onely after the sterre, but after that man that was bytokened after the sterre, the whiche man shuld be lord of alle folke. Also they of Inde and of Caldee that come after tyme into Jerusalem, by cause of merchaundise, and also for disport, the which for the most party be lerned in astronomye, sey that in Inde and in other places aboute be mony sterris in the fyrmament that mow not be sey be nyght, but specially an hyghe on this hille of Vaws in a clere wedyr be seye mony dyverse and strong sterris that beneth under the hill be right nought i-seye. Also, as it is aforesaide, this hill of Vaws passeth of hith alle other hillis in the est, and about it is no more of brede than a litell chapelle is made theruppon, the which chapell these iij. worshipfull kyngis ded make of stone and tymber; and there be aboute this hille greces for men to go up to the chapelle on highe, and also ther growith mony good trees and herbes, and dyverse spices alle aboute the hille, by cause it is so highe and so nargh; ther is also a piler of stone made above this chapell, of a wonder heith, and in the hed of the piler stondyth a gret sterre, well made and gylt, and that sterre turneth with the wynde as a fane, and through the light of the sonne by day, and light of the mone be nyght, the same sterre yeveth light a gret waye aboute in the contre; and mony other merveles be told of this hille of Vaws, the which were to long to telle.

Whan the tyme of grace and of mercy was come, that God wolde have mercy on alle mankynde, in the which tyme the fader off hevene sent downe his sonne to take flesch and blode of oure lady seynt Marie, and to be bore a man of hyr for salvation of alle the worlde; in that tyme that Octavianus was emperoure of Rome, and hold emperour of alle the world, in the yere of his empere lxij. as Seint Luke telleth, he sent oute a commaundement to discrie all the world: *Exiit edictum*, &c.; and this descroying was made frist [by] Cyrinus that than was bisshop of Cyrie, and every man yede forth into his owne contree. Than yede Joseph oute of Galile, that is a cite in Nazareth, into a cite of Jury, that was kyng Davidys, the which cite was cleped Bethelem, by cause of Joseph was of the housold and of the mayne of kyng David; therfore he yede into the contrey with oure lady seint Marye, that was his wyf, and also gret with child. So whan they were ther, the tyme was comen that oure lady seint Marie shuld be delivered of her child, and was delivered, and wrapped hym in clothes, and laide hym in a cribbe or in a maungere, for ther was none other place; and sheperdys were fast by in the same contrey, kepyng her shepe in the nyght, and an angelle of hevene come and stode beside hem with a gret light, whereof they were gretly agast, and than the angell saide to hem, beth not adred, for I tell you a gret joye that shalbe to alle the people, for this day is bore to us oure Lord Jhesu Crist in the cite of David; and this shalbe to you a tokyn, ye shalle fynde a yong childe wrapped in clothes, and put in a cribbe: and sodeynliche ther come gret multitude of angels of heven praysing God and saide, *Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bone voluntatis;* that is to sey, joye be to God on highe, and pees on erth to men of good wille. And ye shulle understonde that Bethlem was never of no gret reputation, nother no place of no gret quantite, and hit hath a good foundement and a good grounde, for ther be mony caves and dennes under erth, and that Bethlem is from Jerusalem ij. litell mile, and is but a castell, but it is clepid a cite, by cause kyng David was bore there; and in that toune was sum tyme an hous, the which was the hous of Ysaie, that was fader to kyng Davith, in the which hous as it is aforesaid was kyng David bore, and anoynted into the kyngdome of Israel by Samuell, the prophet; and in the same place God Cristis sonne was bore of oure lady seint Marie the holy virgine, and this place was sum tyme in an ende of a strete that then was clepid the cornered or the helede strete; and the cause that the strete is clepid so is this, by cause of gret hete and brennyng of the sonne, it was heled above with blacke clothis and other thinges, and specially of trees and of tymber; and in this place that was in the ende of the strete, in the which stode sum tyme an hous that was kyng David and Isaye his faders, ther left a litell hous to-fore a denne under the erth, made and shaped like a litell seler: and ther Isaye, that was fader to kyng David, and other that dwelled after hym, put certayne necessaries that longeth to houshold for hete of the sonne. It is also the maner of alle the contre both in citees and in townes that ther bene certeyn houses the which bene clepid ther *althan*, that we clepe here ostrees, and in thes houses be mules, hors, asses, and camelx alwaye redy, that if so be that ony pilgryme or merchaunt, or ony man that travayleth be the contrey be it fer or nere, and hym nede ony best be it for hym self or for his merchaundyse, than he doth to seche an house that is clepid *althane*, and ther he may hure an hors or what best he wille for a certeyne price; and whan he hath what best hym liketh, than he goth withine that cite to another cite, ther as he will abyde and rest hym for a tyme; than he dischargeth his hors, or what best that he hath of his burdeyn, and so sendeth hym into such an hous that is ther also clepid *althan*, in the whiche hous bene also such bestis as it is aforesaide for to hure, and her maister of the hous takith this best, and yeveth hym mete, and whan he may he sendeth hym home to the place he come fro; and yef so be that he may not kepe hym, than he will take the same best, and lede hym oute of the cite, and bring hym into the way; and so the best wille goo forth home withoute ony ledyng of man, even to his maisters house, withoute perile of wilde bestis or theves in the way: and so ech man knoweth others best, be they never so fer from other. And of such houses the lord of the grounde hath gret wynnyng, and gret tolle of hyring of these bestis. And such a maner of hous afore the byrth of Crist was the place there Crist was bore: but aboute the tyme of the Nativite of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, that hous was all destroyed, in so much that there was nothing left but brokyn walles on every side, and a litell cave under erth, and a lytell unthrifty hous before the cave; and ther men selled bred uppon the same grounde. It is also the usage in alle the contrey that all the brede that shalbe solde shalbe brought into a certeyne place, and of the brede that shalbe sold in the day the kyng and the lord of the grounde that nyght shalle have therof a certeyne of monye. And whan kyng David was made kyng of Jerusalem, than was sum tyme Isaies, his faders, left onely to hym; but be processe of tyme, whan Jerusalem was destroyed, and alle the contre aboute, no man toke kepe of this hous, by cause it was also destroyed, and nothing left but, as it is aforesaide, a litell unthrifty hous, and a cave under erth, and walles on every syde alle to-broken; and to-fore this hous was brede solde and tymber; and other thingis that were brought to markat that myght not be sold at one tyme were put into this litell hous to the nexst merket, and asses, horses, and other bestis that come to the market, were tyed aboute that unthrifty hous.

But for to speke of this fyrst matere ayen, whan Octavianus had sent oute a commaundement, as it is aforesaide, that every man and woman shuld goo into his owne contrey and cite and to his towne that he was bore in; than went Joseph and oure lady seint Marye ridyng on an asse late in the even-tyde toward Bethlem, as it is aforesaid; and bycause they come so late, and alle places were ocupied with pilgrimes and other men, and also they come in pover arraye, they yede aboute the cite, and no man wold resceyve hem, and specially becawse men did see oure lady Marie a yong maide, sittyng upon an asse, hevy and sory and full wery of the way, and also gret with childe, and nygh the tyme of beryng of her childe; than Joseph lad oure lady into that forsaide place that no man toke kepe downe into the litell derke hous, and there oure Lord Jhesu Crist the same nyght was bore of oure lady the blessed virgine, withoute ony dissease or sorowe of her body, for salvacion of alle mankynde. And in that hous byfore the cave of old tyme was left a maungere of the lengh of a fadome made in a walle, and to that same maungere was an oxe of a pover mannes tyed that no man wold herbrough, and beside that oxe Joseph tied his asse, and in the same maungere oure lady seint Marie wrapped hyr blessid child, oure lord Jhesu Crist, in clothes, and laide hym therein in hey byfore the oxe and the asse, for ther was none other place. Ye shall understonde also that in alle the contrey it is the maner that in diverse ostries be maungers, sume be made of erth and summe of stone, and every maungere is a iij. or iiij. fote of lengh, for so moch that an hors or an other best may have his mangere by hym self; and such a mangere was made in the same place ther Crist was bore, and in that same place oure ladye seint Marie laide hyr sone, as it is tolde afore.

The place where the angelle appered to the shepperdes that nyght that Crist was bore is but a mile fro Bethlem; and in that same place David, whan he was a child, pastured shepe, and kept hem fro the bere and the lyon; summe bokes seyn also that the sheperdes of that contre twyes in the yere by wonte to kepe her shepe in the nyght, and in thilke tyme specially whan the nyght and the day be both of one lengh. And ye shall understonde that the lond aboute Bethleem, and the lond of the behest, and all the lond in the Est is wonderlych ordeyned and set for all mounteyns for the most partye; for in summ place a man shalle not knowe wynter fro somer, and in summ place it is right colde, and in sume place it is after the tyme both wynter and somer as it is in this contre, after as the place is in valeis or in playne countreyes or in mounteyns; for sume tyme in mounteyns in sum place in the Est men shall fynde snowe in the moneth of August, and that snowe is gadered of theim that dwellith nexst aboute and put in caves, and afterward it is bore in chaffe to the merket, and the gret lordys of the contre wille by it and bere it to her houses, and set it in a basyn apon the borde to make her drinke cold, but whan it is uncovered oute of the chaff anoun it dissolveth and wasteth away; but comonlych in all the contry of the Est, but yf it be in some woodes or places fulle of shadowe, or aboute ony hille ther ony flode is, ther is evermore throughe the yere snowe aboute in the contrey. In September and October, whan the sonne commeth a litell lowe in that contrey, than sedys commonlich begynne to wax in the feldis, as in this contrey herbis wax in Marche and Aprill; also in sume parties of the Est men repe corne in Aprill and in Marche, but most in May, after the place and grounde is sett, as in some place the grounde is hieer, in sum place lower, but by Bethlem be mony mo places of good pasture and of hote and fatt grounde than in other places, in so moch that at Cristesmasse barlie begynneth to ere and wax ripe, and than men sende thider of diverse contres her hors and her mules to make hem fatt. And they by barlich there in the feld by a certeyne mesure; and they that have such barliche to sell, they have certeyne stables, and in hem they put her hors and her mules to make hem fatt, and we cleppe among us Cristesmasse and thei cleppe it among hem in her longage the time of herbes. And for as moch as Crist was bore of oure lady seint Marie, pees was then in alle the world, and betwene Bethlem and that place ther the angell appered to the shepherdis was but half a mile and a litell wey more; and also ther was no gret colde thereaboute, therfore the sheperdis alle the wynter, nyght and day, now in one place and nowe in another, dwelled ther with ther shepe, and so they do yet into this day, &c.

In thilke day, when the commaundement was sent from Cesar August as it is afore saide, than was Heraude made and ordeyned kyng of the lond of Jewes by the emperoure and by the Romayns; and yet Heraude was no Jewe ne kyng of Jewes bore, but by cause that the same Sesar August and the Romains had made subjet to hem the lond of Jurie and mony other londes and provinces aboute into Inde, Pers, and Caldee, through strong hond he made hym kyng. Wherefore alle the contrey will wele that Herode was but alion and never come of kyngis blode, ne of Jewes bore, but as it is saide to-fore he was made kyng by the emperoure and by the Romains. So that the prophecie of Daniell shuld be fulfillid in the tyme of the byrth of Crist, the which saide *Cum venerit sanctus sanctorum cessabit unctio vestra*, &c. as it is aforesaid; yet Jewes contynuyng in her malice and in her falsnes said that long tyme after the nativitie of Crist her unction cesed, but they had mony kynges after, but yet the fals Jewes forsoke not that Herode came a Jewe of the fader side and of woman paynyme on the moder syde, and so he was no verrey Jewe. Wherefore Cristen men make the Jewes utterlye confused of the prophecie of Jacob her patriarke that saide this: *Non auferetur sceptrum de Juda, nec dux de femore ejus, donec veniat qui mittendus est, et ipse erit expectatio gentium*, &c. that is to saye, The septer of Jude shal not be do away in the stocke of linage til he that come schalbe sent, and he shal be that folke have abidde. And mony other questiouns be bytwene the Cristen men and the Jewes in that contrey of the unction of her kynges.

Than God oure lord was bore of oure lady seint Marie for salvation of alle mankynde, as it is aforesaide, the which lord is ever redy to alle men that calle on hym. In trewthe this sterre that was prophecied by Balaham and long tyme abiden and loked after by the xij. astronomyers in the hille of Vaws, as it is aforesaide, the same nyght and the same oure that God was bore the same sterre began to arise in the maner of the sonne bright shynyng, and so after in the fourme of an egle it assendit above the hille, and alle that day in the hiest place of the erth it abode withoute ony movynge, in so moch that, when the sonne was most hote and most highe, ther was no difference bytwene the sterre and the sonne in shynyng. Neverthelese, sume bokes saye that in the same day that God was bore were mony sonnes sey, but whan this day of the Nativite of oure Lord was past, the sterre assendid up into the firmament, which sterre that this shewed was nothing like to sterres in diverse places of the fyrmament, for it had right long strakes and beames more brennyng and more lighter than a bronde of fyre, and as an egille fleyng and betyng the eyre with his wynges right, so the strakes and the beames of the sterre had in hym self a fourme of a likenes of a yong childe, and above hym assigne of the holy crois, and a voice was herde in the sterre, saying, *Natus est nobis hodie rex Judeorum, qui est gentium dominator: ite ad inquirendum eum et ad orandum*, &c., that is to saye, This day is bore to us the kyng of Jewes, that folkes have abidde and lord is of hem, goth and sekyth hym, and doth hym worship. Therfore we shall understond that for strenghing of oure faith, and to afferme this mater aforsaide, Almighty God was providence in his ordinaunce faile it not, and as Seint Poule saith, *Vocat ea que non sunt tanquam ea que sunt*, that is to saye, He kepeth thilke that be not as welle as thilke that be of providence in his ordinaunce. This he ded, and disposid that hym self he wold in the begynnyng of the testament yeve a voice to speke oute of a sterre that was prophecied of Balaham. Than all the people, both man and woman, of alle the contreys aboute, whan they se this wonderfull and mervelous sterre, and also herde the voice out of the sterre, they were gretlich agast, and had gret wonder thereoff, but yet they wist wele that it was prophecied by Balaham that was no Jewe, and of long tyme was desyred and abyden of alle the peple in that contreys.

This whan theis iij. worshipfull kyngis, that in that tyme reigned in Inde, Caldee, and Pers, were sikyrlye enformed by thes astronomyers and by prophecies as is saide to-fore of this sterre, they were right glad they had grace to se that sterre in her dayes that was of so long tyme prophecied afore, and that alle peple had so long abiden and loked after; whereuppon these iij. worshippfull kyngis, though every of hem were farre from other, and none knewe otheres purpose, yet in one tyme and in one oure this sterre appered to hem alle iij., and than thei ordeyned and purposed hem anon with gret and riche yeftes, and with mony riche and diverse ornamentis that were longing to kyngis arraye, and also with mules, camelx, and hors charged with gret tresoure, and with nombre and multitude of peple, in the best array that they myght goo to seke and worship the lord and kyng of Jewes, that was bore, as the voice of the sterre had commaunded, spoken, and preched; and ferthermore thay arrayed mochell the more honestlich and worshipfullich, that they knewe wele that he was a worshipfuller kyng and a worthyer than any of them was. Ferthermore they iij. blessid kyngis, everich kyng by hym self, and with hem her cariage, that is to seye, bestis of oxon, and shepe, and other bestis that longeth to mannes levyng and sustinaunce; they had also alle maner necessaries that longith to beddyng or to chamber and to kechyn, and al maner thing that longeth to mannes mete or bestes mete provided, and was caried on hors, mules, and camelx with hem, in so moch that they ordeyned of every thing gret plente that should suffice hem i-noughe by alle the way both outewarde and homwarde, and also every kyng had with hym a gret multitude of peple as it had ben an oost. It is also the maner in the Est and in alle the contrey aboute, oute take gret citees, that in mony places and townes ther be mony fayre ostreis, and in the most party alle maner vitailes both for man and best be ther redy, but for lordes that goo or ride with gret multitude of peple, beddyng and other necessaries that longeth to chamber or to the kechyn beth not profitable to hem ne honest, and therfore lordes have alle such maner necessaries caried with hem on mules, and camelx, and other bestis; but for the most party men goo and ride all in the nyght for gret brennyg of the sonne. Ferthermore, ye shall understonde that ther be iij. Ynedes, of the which iij. these iij. kynges were lordes of, and also alle these londes and kyngdomes for the most party ben iles, and ther be also gret waters and wildernesse fulle of wilde and perilous bestis and horrible serpentis, and ther growe also redis so high and so gret that men make therof houses and shippes, and these iles be devided and departid eche by hem selfe fer frome other, and in these iles grow also herbes and right perilouse bestis, so that with gret travaile a man shalle passe from one kingdome into another.

In the first Inede was the londe of Nube, and in that lond reigned kyng Melchior, in the tyme that Crist was bore; ther is also the lond of Arabie, in the which lond is the hill of Synay, and a man may lightly saile into the Rede See oute of Egipt into Syrie and into Inde. Ferthermore, pilgrimis and marchauntes that from Ynde passe by the Rede See, saye that all the grounde of it is so rede, that the water above semeth as it were wyne, notwithstondyng the water is of coloure as other water is, it is also salt, and it is also so clear that in deppest place thereof men mow see fysshes, and discrie all other thinges that be in the bottom therof. Also the Rede See is iij. cornered, or it hath iij. corners, and it ebbeth and floweth into the londe oute of the oxian, and it is iiij. or v. mile brode ther it is broddest, where the children of Israel went through with drye fete whan Pharoo and his oost pursued hem and were dreynt alle in the same Rede See. Oute of the Rede See folowith a water and a gret flode into a flode of paradyse, the which flode is clepid Nylus, and that Nylus passeth by Egipt. And by it cometh mony a gret merchaunde out of the est of Inde by this water Nylus, and so forth passeth into Egipt, Syrie, Babiloyne, and Alisaunder, and so forth throughe the world. Ferthermore, ye shall understonde that alle the erth in the londe of Arabie, in the which the hill of Synay is, as it is aforesaide, is moche redde, and also stones, and trees, and alle other thingis that growe in that londe, for the most partye be alle redde. In that londe is founde gold wonderlych redy in maner of small and pynne rotes, and that gold is the best gold in the world. Ther is also an hill that is called Bena, and in this hill is founde a precious stone that is cleped smaragdus; and this stone, with gret travayle and gret craft, is kytt oute of the hille, and that hille is kept bysilich and stronglich of servauntes that long to the sowdon. In the seconde Ynde was the kyngdome of Godolye, of that kyngdome Baltazar was kyng bore, and this Baltazar offrede scence to God, and ther was also in the londe of olde tyme the kyngdome of Saba. And ye shalle understond that in this lond groweth monye moo good spices than in all the contrey of the Est, and specially there groweth ensence more than in alle the places of the world, and it droppeth downe of certeyne trees in maner of gumme, and in other places ther is but litell or none.

In the iij^{de} Ynde was the kyngdome that was cleped Taars; of that kyngdome was Jasper kyng, in the tyme of the byrth of Crist, which Jasper offred mirre to God, and in this lond is that isle that is clepide Egripwile, in the which yle seint Thomas the apostell lieth, and in this lond growet mirre plente more than in ony place of the worlde, and wexeth like eres of corne that were brent with wedyr, and it waxeth right thikke, and whan it waxeth ripe it is so soft that it cleveth onne mennes clothes as they goo by the hyghe way, and than men take smale cordes and gerdeles, and drawe hem alle aboute on the herbes, and the mirre cleveth apon these cordes and girdeles, and so afterwarde the mirre is wrong oute of hem. Whe[r]fore we shull understonde that alle this was do of gret ordynaunce and gret mercy of God, that theise iij. kyngis, Melchior, Baltazar, and Jaspar, of thilke londes and kyngdomes, in the which these yftes waxed and growed, and also the which shuld be offred to God in the olde prophecie, rather of theise smale londes thaye shuld be clepid kynges than of gret londes, whereof saith David the prophete; *Reges Tharsis et insule munera offerent, reges Arabum et Saba dona adducent;* that is to say, Kyng of Taars and of the ile shalle offer yftes, kyngis of Arabie and of Saba shall bring yftes. Sume tyme these kynges had other names, for Melchior was clepid kyng of Nube and of Arabie, Baltazar was clepid kyng of Godely and of Saba, and Jasper was clepid the kyng of Taars [and] of Egripwille the ile, and it was clepid the kyngdom of Taars bycause it was annexide to the same ile, and so the names of her kyngdomes be specified in especiall for difference of other citees and iles that be theraboute.

Afterwarde, whan these iij. rich kyngis had arrayed hem with rich tresoure and rich ornamentis and with gret multitude of peple as it is aforesaide, and were passed forth oute of her kyngdomes, though hit were that none of hem wist of other, ne knewe of others commyng ne intention, because of the long waye and fer waye that was betwene every kyngdome, that the stere yevenly yede byfore every kyng and alle her peple, and whan they stode stille or rested the sterre stode stille, and when they yede or riden, the sterre all way gede forth to-fore hem in his vertue and in his strengh, and yaff light to alle her way. And as it is writen afore, in the tyme that Crist was bore it was pees in alle the world, wherefore in alle the citees and townes that they yede by this was none gate shutt nether nyght ne day, but it semed to hem that the nyght was to hem day. Wherefore alle men of citees and townes that theise worthy kyngis yede by in the nyght were wonderlich agast and passinglich merveyled therof, for they sight kyngis with gret multitude of peple and bestis passe by hem in gret hast in the nyght, but they wist not what they were, ne fro what place they come, ne whither they shuld goo, for in the morow they sighe the wey gretlye defouleth with hors fete and other bestis. Wherefore they were in gret doute what it shuld be, and gret altercation was among hem in alle the contre long tyme. Ferthermore, when thise kingis riden throughe diverse londes, kyngdomes, citees, and townes, they riden over hilles, waters, valeis, pleynes, and other diverse and perilouse places without ony dissease or lettyng, for alle the waye that they ridene was semyng to hem pleyne and evyn, and toke never no herbrough nyght nor day, ne by the way never rested hem self nor her hors ne other bestis that were in her companye, ne never ete ne dronke after the tyme thay had take her waye tille they come into Bethlem, ne alle this tyme semed to hem but one day; and this throughe the grace of God and gret mercy of God and ledyng of the sterre, they come out of her londes and kyngdomes into Jerusalem the xiij. day that Crist was bore in the uprisyng of the sonne, whereof it is no doute, for they founde oure lady seint Marie and her childe in the same place, and in the cave there Crist was bore and laide in the mangere. Also mony bokes telleth that they come into Jerusalem and into Bethlem in middes of the day, and other bokes sayne that they come this hastelich in this wayes and this to Jerusalem and into Bethlem, whereof ye shalle understonde as seint Gregorie saith in an Omelie, *si divina operacio humana ratione comprehendi posset, non esset admirabilis nec fides haberet meritum cui humana ratio prebet experimentum,* that is to seye, yf the workys myght be comprehendid in mannes witt by reason, it were no wonder also ne hath no mede, yf kyndely reason shewet it to a man, for that Lord God that in the olde testament ledde Abacuck, the prophete, by an here of his hed out of the Jurie into Babiloyne in Caldee, the which is an c. dayes jornaye bytwene in-going and commyng to Daniell that was in the pitt among the lions, and anon restored the same Abacuck in his place ayeine, that same Lord God in the newe testament was mighty to lede and to bring these worshipfull kyngis out of the Est and oute of theire kyngdomes into the lond of Jurye in xiij. dayes, withoute ony dissease or lettyng; also as oure lord Jhesu Crist, after his resurrection, come to his disciples into an hous withoute ony opynyng of gate or locke, and as the fyre brent and did no harme to the iij. children, whan thaye were put into the furneis of fyre, ne no savour of smoke was founde in hem, right so these iij. kyngis, in whos tyme oure lady seint Marie bere oure lord Jhesu Crist verrey God and man, was as to-fore and ever after clene maide, also ye shalle understonde that God allemyghty [myght] have brought these iij. kyngis and alle her folke out of the Est into Jury in a moment, as he brought Abacuck the prophete aforsaide. But, though the secounde persone God Almyghty meked and lowed hym self, and in gret poverte was brone and toke uppon hym mankynde and mannes frelte, he wold neverthelesse mervelously shewe his byrth to alle the world in heven and in erth, by the myght of his godhed of his majeste, &c.

Than these iij. blessid kyngis everych in his way with his oost and with his company were almost come to Jerusalem, save to mile, than a gret and a derke cloude helede alle the erth, and in that derke cloude they lost her sterre; of this prophecied Isaie, and saide *Surge illuminare Jerusalem, quia venit lumen tuum, et gloria Domini super te orta est, quia ecce tenebre operient terram et caligo populos.* That is to saie, Jerusalem, arise, and take light, for the light is come, and the glorie of God is sprong uppon the, for lo derkenes shall hele the erth and a cloude the peple. Whan these iij. kyngis were nyght Jerusalem, than Melchior kyng of Nube and of Arabie, with his peple, was come fast beside Jerusalem, and by the hille of Calvarye ther Crist was done on the croisse, and by the wille of God ther he abode in a cloude and in derkenes, and that tyme the hill of Calvarie was a rooche of xij. grece of heith, and on this hille theves and other men for her trespasse were put to her deth: ther was also beside this hill and high way, and to this high waye were iij. high wayes metyng togedyr, and so, for the derkenesse of this cloude and also for they knew not the waye, they abidden there and yede no ferther at that tyme.

After that Melchior this was come, as it is afore said, than nexst hym under the cloude came kyng Baltazar, which was kyng of Godolie and of Saba, with his folke, and he abode beside the mounte of Olevete, in a litelle towne that is cleped there Galilee. And ye shalle understond that holy writt speketh moch of this towne; for the disciples of oure lord Jhesu Crist, to-fore his resurrection and after, were wont allwey to come togeder into that towne privylich for drede of the Jewes; and in that same litell towne that is clepid Galilee our lord Jhesu Crist appered to his disciples after his resurrection, as it is wreten, *Precedet vos in Galileam, ibi eum videbitis,* that is to say, he shall goo to see you in Galilee, and ther ye shull fynd hym. But ther is another londe that is clepid Galilee, and that is a gret lordship, and that is fro Jerusalem iij. days jorney.

Than afterward, whan these ij. kynges, Melchior and Baltazar, were come and abode in these places aforsaide in the cloudes and in derkenesse, than the cloude began to assende and wax clere, but the sterre appered not: so whan these ij. kyngis se that they were nere the cite of Jerusalem, thoughe none of hem yet knew of other, they to her waye towarde the cite with all her folke, and when they come to the highe wey beside the mounte of Calvarie, ther as these iij. wayes met togeder, frist came Jasper kyng of Taars and of the ile of Egripwille, and the other ij. kyngis, eche with his host, and so these iij. glorious kynges, with her oostes and with her cariage and bestis, mett togeder in this highe way beside the hille of Calvarie. And notwithstondyng non of hem never afore had sen other, ne none of hem knew others persone ne knew of others commyng, yet at her metyng everych of hem anon, with righte gret joye and gret reverence, kissid other, and though they were of diverse langages, yet everich of hem as to her semyng spokyn togedyr, and every of hem had told her purpose and the cause of his way, and alle her causes were accordyng into one. Than they were moche more gladder and more fervent in her waye; and so they riden forth and sodenlych, at the uprisyng of the sonne, they come in to the cite of Jerusalem; and whan they knewe that Jerusalem was the kyngis cite, the whiche there predecessors and the Caldees had beseged and distroyed, they were right glad, supposyng to have founde the kyng of Jewes there in that cite.

Ferthermore ye shalle understond that Herode, than kyng, with alle the cite, was gretly distrobled of her sodeyne commyng, for her companye and here bestis were of so gret nomber and so gret multitude that the cite myght not resceyve hem, but for the most partye they laye withoute the cite alle aboute. Whereof Isaie prophecied and said, *Fortitudo gentium venerit tibi, inundatio camelorum operit te, dromedarii Madian et Effa omnes de Saba venient, aurum et thus deferentes et laudem Domino annunciantes:* that is to sey, The strengh of folke cometh to the cite of Jerusalem, gret plenty of camels shul hele the, and dromadaries of Madian and Affa shalle come fro Saba, bringing gold and enscence, and shewing to the Lord, &c.

Afterward, whan these iij. kyngis were come into the cite of Jerusalem, than was Herode the same tyme present in the cite of Jerusalem; as it is said to-fore, he was ordeyned kyng by the emperoure and by the Romains, and he was but yong of age. So these iij. kyngis, whan they were come into the cite, they asked of the peple of this child that was bore, whereof speketh the evangelist, *Cum natus esset Jhesus in Bethelem*, &c., the whiche gospell is to saye, Whan Crist Jhesus was bore in Bethlem, a cite of Jewes, in the dayes of Herode the kyng, the iij. kynges come oute of the Est and saide, where is he that is bore the kyng of Jewes? we sigh his sterre in the Est, and we come to do hym worship.

When Herode herd this, he was distrobled and alle Jerusalem with hym, and gadered togedyr alle the princes of the prestes, and asked of hem where Crist shuld be bore; and they saide in Bethlem of Jurie, this is it writen by the prophete. And then Herode sent oute a duke to rule his peple of Israel. And then Herode cleped to hym privelych these iij. kyngis, and lerned of hem the tyme of the sterre that appered to hem, and so sent hem forth into Bethlem, and saide, Goth and enquereth besilich of this child, and whan ye have founde hym, retorne to me, that I may come and do hym worship. And whan they had herd the kyng, they yede her waye, and the sterre that they sighe in the Est yede forth to-fore hem, tille they come there the child was; and when they sighe the sterre they were moch gladder, and they yede into the hous, and ther they founde a child with Marie his moder, and they opened her tresoure and offered to hym gold, cense, and mirre. And this mater why these iij. kynges came fyrst into Jerusalem, rather than into Bethlem, mony bokes in mony diverse maners declare and expounde, and mony causes han be gret, the which were long to telle.

But among alle other causes, one cause ther was that kyng Herode and the cite were so distrobled for her sodeyne comynge, the which was for the sighe they were kynges, and her oostes come oute of the Est and Caldee, the which peple of olde tyme throughe the sufferaunce of God oft tyme pursuyd the kynges of Jewes, and beseged and distrobled the cite and the lond aboute. Also they were distrobled for bycause they were come fro so fer contre to worship the kyng of Jewes that was nowe bore; bycause that Herode was but an alient and was made kyng by the emperoure and by the Romayns, he was agast lest he shuld have lost his kyngdome by cause that Crist was bore. And also another cause was that theise iij. kyngis of Goddis ordinaunce come into the cite withoute avisement, whan they had lost the sterre, for Jerusalem was the kyngis cite; alwey kyngis of the lond were most abydyng in that cite, and doctours of the lawe and the scribes and her scriptures and her prophecies were evermore present in the cite, so that these Jewes and skrybes, that knew long tyme to-fore the byrth of Crist and the place where he shuld be bore, mowe never schewe no skyll to escuse her falsnesse and her malice. Of this Seint Gregorie in an omelie speketh and saith, *Judeos profecto bene Isaac dum Jacob filium suum benediceret presignavit, qui caligans oculis et prophetizans in presenti filium non vidit, cui tamen imposterum multa previdit*, &c., that is to say, Be this Isaac we mowe say and understonde the Jewes, for Isaac whan he was blynde he blessid Jacob his sonne, and prophecied of hym, and yet whan he had hym byfore hym he sighe hym not, and nevertheles he sighe mony thinges that shuld falle to hym afterwarde. Right so the Jewes were fulle of the sprite of prophecie; but hym that they prophecied of whan thaye had hym among hem they knewe hym not, for they dispised hym whan he was bore, of whome long tyme byfore they prophecied of his byrth; and not onely that he shuld be bore, but the place where he shuld be bore, tolde they to Herode. So that her connynge and her prophecie shalbe wittenesse to her dampnation and to help of oure beleve̅ and cause of oure salvation. Whan these iij. kyngis were enformed by Herode and by the doctours of the lawe of the byrth of Crist and of the place where he was bore, and so were passed oute of the cite of Jerusalem, than the sterre appered ayen as it did byfore, and so it yede forth to-fore hem tille they come into Bethlem, which is but ij. mile oute of Jerusalem, and fast by the place, as it is aforesaid, where the sheperdis were to the whiche the angelle appered with gret light, and shewed to hem the byrthe of Crist. Ferthermore, as these iij. worthy kyngis riden by the waye, and by the same place there the saide shepherdis were ridd and spake with hem; and when the sheperdis sighe the sterre, they ronne togedyr, and said to the kynges that such a light and such a clerenesse, an aungell appered to hem and told hem of the byrthe of Crist, with alle that the angell had spoke to hem, and all that they had seen, and herde, and that was do, they tolde everything to these iij. kynges, whereof they were right glad, and with [glad] chere herd and toke good consideration of the shepherdis saying. And so of wittenesse, and of the wordes of the sheperdis, and of the vois of the angell that was herde oute of the sterre, they had no doute of nothyng. Sume bokes in the Est seyn that the vois that was herd oute of the sterre was the vois of the same aungell that shewed the byrth of Crist both to the shepherdis and to the iij. kyngis. They [sey] also in the est that Jewes byleve that the aungell that yede byfore the children of Israel with a piler of fyre whan they went oute of Egipt was the same aungell whos vois was herd in the sterre, and that yede so forth with the sterre to-fore those iij. kyngis; for whan these iij. kyngis spake with the sheperdis the sterre was more and more, and began to shyne brighter and brighter.

Fulgencius saith in a sermon that he maketh, As an hous that is made of ij. sides and ij. walles that be joyned togedyr by corner stones, right so is holychyrch made of ij. peples, as ij. sides ij. walles which be joyned to togeders in one faith and one byleve of a corner stone, Crist Jhesu, theise ij. sides, these ij. walles, where kyngis and sheperds that come fro diverse contres, and Crist a corner stone, that in one faith and one byleve knewe and worshippid these ij. sides and theise ij. walles of kyngis and Jewes, which were faire departed atwynne whan they were in diverse and contrarie byleve; but whan the corner stone Crist Jhesu was mene bytwene hem, he drewe hem both to hym, and made hem both kyng and Jewes one peple, that is to sey, Cristen peple, in maner as they were one in grace, of privye bileve by oure Crist, the whiche, as the apostell saith, is our pees, makyng ij. thyngis one, so that both the kyngis and Jewes were made both one, ther was made and knytt in one corner, and trewe byleve for the one side of the one walle of kyngis came of Crist, whan a newe sterre appered to hem, the other side of the other walle came of Jewes to Crist, when the angell appered to hem, thes iij. kyngis, the fyrst of miscreauntes that leved on Crist this side of this wall that came fro fer was the walle of kyngis; nedes most these kyngis came fro fer to Crist, whan afore they worshipped fals maumettis, and after byleved in hym; and this side and walle of Jewes that came to Crist fro neigh betokeneth that they were founde neigh the place there Crist was bore in. Theis kyngis frome the ferre contrey of the Est were brought to Crist, and thoughe they hem self were no Jewes, yet, as they said, they came for to worship and honoure Crist, the kyng of Jewes.

When these iij. kynges, with alle ther oost and ther company, had spoke with these sheperdis, and yaffe hem yftes, and so had riden forth to Bethlem, than anon as they knew they were come to the place of Bethlem, than they light downe of her hors, and chaunged all her array, and clothed hem in the best and richest array that they had, as kynges shuld be arrayed; and allewaye the sterre yede forth to-fore, and the more nyghe the kyngis came to the place there Crist was, the more the sterre shewed brighter and brighter. And so the same day that these iij. kynges yede oute of Jerusalem, in the frist oure of the day, the same day they came into Bethlem, in the vjth oure of the day; and than these iij. kyngis riden through a cornerd strete, as it is told afore, tylle they were afore a lityll hous, and sone after the sterre departed hym self in so gret light that the litell hous and the cave within were fulle of light. And than anon the sterre ayen assendid up into the eyre, and there stode stille, and allewey abode in the same place, but, as it is aforesaide, the light abode in the place that Crist was and oure lady, as it is said in the gospell afore, *Et intrantes domum*, &c., that is to saye, they yede into the hous, and founde oure lady and hyr childe, and they felle adowne and worshipped hem, and offred to hem yftes, gold, mirre and cense; of this came afterwarde an use that in alle the contrey of the Est ther shall noman come to the presence of the sowdan or to the kyng to speke with hem but yf he have gold and silver, or sumwhat els in his handis. Also or he speke to the sowdone or to the kyng he shall kiss the grounde: and this maner is used in alle the contrey of the Est into this day. Ferthermore, freer menours, when they come to the presence of the sowdan or of the kyng, they offer to hem peris or apples, for they say that they may not touche nor gold ne sylver, and this peris and apples be resceived of the sowdan or of the kyng with all reverence and mekenesse. And that same day that theis iij. kyngis sought God and worshipped hym with yftes in Bethlem, oure lord Jhesu was that tyme in his manned a litell child of xiij. dayes olde, and he was sumdele fat, and he lay in pover clothes and in hey in the maungere up to the armes. Also oure lady seint Marie his moder, as it is writen in diverse bookes, she was a persone fleshly and sumdele browne; and in the presence of these iij. kynges she was covered with a white pover mantelle, and that mantell she held close byfore hyr with her lyft hond, and hyr hed was heled alle togeder save the face with a linen cloth, and she sat uppon the maungere, and with her right honde she held up oure lord Jhesu Crist is hed. Afterward that theis iij. kyngis had worshippid God and kissed his hande devoutlich, and laid her yftes beside the childes hed, what was do with these yftes ye shalle here.

Melchior that was kyng of Nube and of Arabie, that offred gold to God, he was lest of stature and of persone; Baltazar that was kyng of Godolie and of Saba, that offred encense to God, he was of mene stature in his persone: and Jasper that was kyng of Taars and of Egripwille, that offred mirre to God, he was most in persone, and was a blacke Ethiope; whereof is no doute, for among all other the prophete saith, *Coram illo procident Ethiopes, et inimici ejus terram lingent, venient ad te qui detrahebant tibi, et adorabunt vestigia pedum tuorum*, &c., that is to say, Byfore hym Ethiopes shalle falle downe, and his enemies shalle licke the erth; they schall come to the that detraed the, and they shalle worship the steppes of thi fete. Ferthermore, these iij. kynges and her oostes havyng reward to the stature that men were of, that time they were right litell of persone, in so much that alle manere of peple merveyled moch of hem, and that shewed that they were come fro fer contrey oute of the Est. And the nere the springing of the sonne, and the nere toward the Est, that men be bore the lesse they be of stature, and the febeler in wittis, and the more tender; but herbes bene better and hotter, and alle maner of spices be better, and serpentes and such other perilous bestis be grater and more venomous, and alle maner bestes and foules the nere the sonne thay be the more and the gretter. Also ye shall understonde that thes iij. kyngis eche of hem brought oute of ther londes mony riche yftes and rich ornamentis that kyng Alisaunder left in Ynde, in Caldee, and in Pers, and alle the ornamentis that kyng Saba founde in Salomons temple, as diverse vesselx that were of the kyngis hous and of the temple of God in Jerusalem, the whiche, in the tyme of the destruction of Jerusalem, were bore into her contreys and londes by hem of Pers and of Caldee; and mony other jewelx both gold and sylver, and other precious stones, thes kyngis brought with hem to offer to God. But whan they founde oure lord Jhesu Crist laid in hey in the maungere and in pover clothes, as it is aforesaide, and the sterre had yeve so gret light in the place there Crist was that it semed as though they had stond in a furneys of fyre, than these iij. kynges were so sore aferd, of alle the riche jewelx and ornamentis that they brought with hem, when her tresoure was opened, they toke nothing but that came fyrst to her hondis; as Melchior, kyng of Nube and of Arabie, toke out of his tresoure a rounde apple of gold, as moche as a man myght hold in his hand, and xxx^ti^ gilt pens, and that he offerd to the godhed. Baltazar, kyng of Godolie and of Saba, he toke oute of his tresoure encense as it came frist to his honde, that he offred to Godis manhede with weping teres. Than Jasper toke out of his tresoure mirre, and that he offred also to Goddis manhede. And so these iij. worshipfull kyngis were sore agast, and so devoute, and so fervent in her oblation, that of alle the wordes that oure lady said at that tyme they toke but litell consideration, save onelicke that to every kyng, as they offred to God, she bowed downe with her hed mekely, and said, *Deo gratias,* that is to saie, I thanke God, or thanked be God. The appull of gold the which kyng Melchior offred, with the xxx^ti^ gilt penes, was sum tyme kyng Alisaunders the Gret. And that appull he ded make of smale parties of gold, the which he had gadered of the tribute of alle the world, and that he bare allwaye in his hand, and this appull was left in Inde whan he was come fro paradise, with mony other ornamentis. Moreover it is maner in alle the contreys of the Est, that whan the sowdon or kyng passeth through a citie, than every man after his power is to-fore his owne dore, and ther he casteth encense and myrre in the fyre; and what man that doth it not he shall be hold as for a rebell ayenst the sowdon or the kyng, for thereto is take gret kepe, and this usage betokeneth in alle the Est trewe subjection and trewe obbedience both to God, or maumet, or to kyng, where it is do. Ferthermore, in olde tyme martires were not onely constreyned to worship maumettes, but also to worship hem with encense and fyre, and this maner Sarezins aske allwaye of Cristen men that be in her prisone for to come into her temple, and of the Sarezins coost wilfully to do sacrifice with fyre and encense.

Though almighty God lowed and meked hymself and became man for owre salvation, and was bore of his blessed moder Marie, as it is aforesaide, yet he had no nede of these yftes of these iij. worshipfull kyngis, for he made alle the world of nought, and all that is in heven and in erth is in his power and at his will; neverthelese ye shalle understonde that the rounde appull of gold that kyng Alisaunder ded make, as it is aforesaide, the which appull Melchior the kyng offred to oure lord Jhesu Crist; and whan he hed offred that appull, it was in a moment broke alle to dust, and so by this we shalle understond in figure, as the stone was in the hille kut oute of the hille withoute mannes hand or any tole, and breke an orible mawmett into dust and powder, the which Naybegoddonosor in his sleghe sight, right so that stone, that is to say oure lorde Jhesu Crist, that withoute ony corruption of synne was bore into this world, the apull, that betokeneth the world, through his mekenesse, and through his vertue, and the strenght of his majeste and of his godhed, in a moment alle to-brake to nought. And what was do with these yftes afterward ye shalle here.

Whan theis iij. kyngis had this perfourmed her way and her wille, and offred and do all thing that they came fore, than, as mankynde asketh and wolde, the iij. kyngis and alle her men, hors, and other bestis begunne to ete, and drinke, and slepe, and toke hem to her rest, and to disport all that day after in Bethlem, for, as it is tolde byfore, they had neyther ete ne dronke to-fore in xiij. dayes; and than they told mekely to alle men in that cite of Bethlem and of the contrey aboute how wonderfullich the sterre had brought hem thedyr frome the ferthest party of the world. Farthermore, as the Evangelist saith, *Et responso accepto in sompnis ne redirent ad Herodem, per aliam viam reversi sunt in regionem suam,* &c., that is to saye, An aunswere taken to these iij. kyngis in her slepe that they shuld turne ayene not to Herode, by another way returne home into her kyngdomes; than the sterre that to-fore tyme yede afore hem appered no more after. And so these iij. kyngis that sodenlich met togeder at the mounte of Calvarie, they rid alle thre home togedyr to her kyngdomes with gret joye, and toke herbrowe by the way as men shulld do. Also these iij. kyngis, with all her peple and her cariage, ridd through alle the londes and provynces that Olofernus of old tyme had riden and passed by with all his oost, in so moch the peple supposed that Olofernus had ben come thedyr ayen. Ferthermore, as they came into ony towne or citee, they were worthly and mekely resceyved of alle the peple, and evermore they prechid and tolde to alle the peple as they ridd alle that they had seyne, done, and herd, so that in alle the contre as they yede they were so meke and so gracious among alle the peple, that her name and her loos never after was foryete; but the way that they had ridd byfore oute of her londes and of her kyngdomes in xiij. dayes through ledyng of the sterre, thay myght not unneth goo after ne ride home ayene in ij. yere, and that was do that thay and alle her men shuld knowe what difference is betwixt Goddis wirkyng and mannes wirkyng.

Whan Herode and the scribe and other pepill herd tell that the iij. kyngis were goo home agene, and were not come to hym as he had bedde hem, and tolde of her gret nobley; wherefore thyse Herode, of gret angur, brent and distroyed alle the lond that was under his power that these iij. kyngis had ridde by, and of gret malice and enmyte he pursued after hem a gret way; and alweye as they rode after these iij. kyngis he founde the peple blesse and prayse hem, and tolde of her nobley; and specially hem of Taars and of Circile, for he put uppon hem that thay had suffered hem prevylich to passe over the see in her shippes, and therfore he brent alle her shippes and alle her good. Also kyng Herode and the scribes pursued these iij. kyngis of gret envy, for they had herd howe mervelouslich they were come oute of her londes and kyngdomes in xiij. dayes, through ledyng of the sterre, and how afterward they yede home agayne withoute ony sterre, with guydes and interpretoures; for alle maner men that these iij. kyngis passed by sufficeth not to tell howe wondyrfullich they passed nyght and day by hem. And therof Jewes that dwellid aboute in diverse londes and places, bare wittnesse hereof to Herode and to alle the scribes and other Jewes; and so for this wonderfull doing the paynims, that had no knowliche of holy writt, ne of the birth of Crist, clepid these iij. kyngis *magos*, that is to say wicches; and the Jewes that knewe the scripturs, and the byrth of Crist, and the place, of envye and falsnesse excitede paynimes alle aboute to calle hem wicches: and so it was brought into an usage that they be cleped so into this day. Of this name divers bokes and expocitions telleth, the which is none nede to telle here. But withoute doute they were gloriouse kynges of londes and kyngdomes in the Est, most worshippful and myghtfull, as Cristen men that dwelleth ther bere witnesse, and other, for to do away alle manere of doute of alle that is aforesaide, and with gret mekenesse and humilite, and reprevyng of the falsnesse of the Jewes, Almyghty God, that is ever wondyrfull in his seintes and gloriouse, wold have the previte of his byrth to be knowe to alle the pepill, so that his gloriouse name, that was fyrst hidd onely in the lond of Jurye unto his byrth, the same name alle maner of pepille and all maner nations, fro the fyrst party of the world into the Est, should worship and prayse his name.

After that these iij. kyngis were come home with gret travaile to the hille of Vaws aforesaid, than they made ther a fayre chapelle in the worship of the child that they had sought. Also they made her covenaunt to mete togeder alle ther at that same place ones in the yere, and at that same place thei ordeigned her sepulturs. Than, a litell while after, alle the princes, lordes, and worshipfulle knyghtes of her londes and kyngdomes, heryng of the commyng of theis iij. kynges, anon they ridd to them with gret solempnite and gret worship, and met with hem at the place aforesaide, and with gret mekenesse and humilitie resceyved hem. And whan they had herd howe wonderfully God had wrought by these iij. kingis, than they had hem in more reverence, worship, love, and drede, evermore after. So whan these iij. kyngis had ordeyned her testamentes and do what they wold, than they toke her leve everiche of other, and every kyng rode home with his peple into his owne londe and kyngdome that he came fro, with gret joye and solempnite. And this every kyng departed from other in her bodily persones, but never in her hertis, as for that tyme; and whan they were come home into her owne landes, than they told and prechid to alle the peple alle that they sight, hard, and done, in alle her way: also they ded make in alle her temples, after the same fourme and the same likenesse as it appered to hem, a sterre. Wherefore mony paynymes left her erroures and her mawmettys, and worshipped the child that the iij. kyngis had sought. And this these iij. worshipfull kyngis dwelled in her londes and kyngdomes worshipfully with honeste governaunce and conversation, tille the assencion of Crist and the commyng of St. Thomas the apostelle.

After that these iij. kyngis were goo fro Bethlem forth of the contrey, than ther began to spring and waxe a gret fame of oure lady Seint Marie, and of her child, of these iij. kyngis alle aboute. Wherefore oure lady, for gret drede of the Jewes, fled oute of the litell hous that Crist was bore in, and went into another derke cave under erth, and ther she abode with her child tylle the tyme of hyr purification; and as God wold, ther was diverse men and women loved oure lady Seint Marie and her sonne, and mynysterd to hem alle maner of necessaries that were nedefulle to hem. And afterward, whan the faith of God began to waxe and increse, than there was made a chapell in the same cave in the worship of these iij. kyngis and Seint Nicolas; and in this chapell there is a stone uppon which oure lady Seint Marie was wont to sitt whan she yaffe her child soke; and on a tyme, as sche sat uppon the stone and yaffe her sonne soke, ther felle adowne from her tete a litell milke on the same stone, and that is ther at this day; and the more that it is shraped with knyfes the more it waxeth, and this milke is bore into diverse places of pilgrimes.

Also when oure lady was goo oute of the litelle hous, and came into this cave, she had forget behynd her her smocke and clothes that Crist was wrapped in, foulde alle togeder, and laide an highe in the mangere, and so they were hole and fresche in the same place unto the tyme that sentt Elyne, the worshipfull quene that was moder to kyng Constantyne, came thedyr into the same place; for the Jewes of envie held that place where Crist was bore a foule cursed place, insomoch they wold suffer neither man, woman, child, ne best, to goo into that place.

Ferthermore, when oure lady was come into the temple and offred her childe with turtles or doves, after Moyses lawe, as holy writt tellethe, and Symeon toke hym in his handis and said: *Nunc dimittis, Domine, servum* *tuum secundum verbum tuum in pace*, &c; that is to saye, Let thy servaunt be in pees; the same tyme Symeon and Anne, the olde woman, in presence of the scribes and phariseis, prophecied mony thingis of oure lord Jhesu Crist, as holy writt telleth; and so gret name was of oure lady and of her son among the Jewes, that she myght not ne also durst not abide no lenger in that place, for drede of kyng Herode and of the Jewes, and as the gospell saith, *Angelus domini apparuit in sompnis Joseph dicens, Surge, accipe puerum cum matre ejus, et fuge in Egiptum*, &c.; that is to saye, An angelle of God appered to Joseph in his slepe, and said, Arise, and take the child and his moder, and fle into Egypt in the nyght, and ther be tylle I tell the, for it is come that Herode shall seke the childe to sle hym. Than Joseph roos, and toke the child and moder, and yede into Egipt, and there he was till Herode was ded. And ye shall understonde that oure lady Seint Marie and her sonne dwelled in Egipt vij. yere; and Egipt is fro Bethlem vij. dayes jornaye; and in this way that oure lady Seint Marie yede into Egipt, and in the way that she come ayen, grewe drye rooses, and these rooses be clepyd the roose of Jeryce; and these rooses growe in no place in alle the contrey, but onely in that same contrey; and these rooses sheperdis of the contrey, that goth aboute with her shepe, they gadder hem in tyme of the yere and selle hem for brede to pilgrimes and to other men of the contre aboute, [and so they be borne into dyverse cuntrees and londes aboute. Forthermore, in the same place where oure lady dwellide with her sone is nowe a gardeyn, in the whiche growith bawme. And this gardeyn ys noght fulliche as longe as a man may caste a ston. And ther ben also in this garden vij. welles of water, in the whiche oure lady Seynt Marye wasshed her sone, and wasshed her clothis and her sons clothes. And ye shull understonde that in this gardeyn ben manye busshes of bawme, and they ben moche lyche busshes of roses; and these busshes ben litell heyer thanne a fathem of lengthe, and the leves ben liche treyfoiles, and to every a cristen man of the sowdones prisoners is assignede to kepe hit and to make it clene. And ther ys also a grete merveille and a greet myracle of these busshes of bawme, for ther may no man kepe hem ne dight hem, but he be a cristen man, and that often tyme hathe be prevede,—for whanne a Jewe or a paynem kepith hem, anoon they waxen drye, and growen no more. And in the monethe of March the sowdone is allwey abidynge in this gardeyn; and thanne roddes ben kutte as a vyne, and whanne they ben cutte thei be bounde aboute with cotoun, and under the cutting of the roddes and the cotoun ben sette dysshes of silver, and so the bawme renneth down into the vesselles oute of the kuttynges and thorug the cotoun, as water renneth oute of the vyne. And oute of the disshes the bawme ys putte into a greet potte of silver, and that potte is more thanne vj. galonns; and thanne the sowdone takith alle this bawme into his owne kepynge specially: but whanne any messenger is sent from any kynge for bawme, than the sowdone gevith hym a litill vyel fulle of that bawme. And whanne the bawme is all gadrede and dropped oute of the roddes, thanne the sowdone gothe home; and every cristen man that hath a busshe to kepe, he takithe the roddes that ben cutte, and they sethen hem in watir in a clene potte, and the bawme swemmethe above the water, as it were fatnes of flesshe. And this bawme is good for alle maner of brosures; and if a man be wounded, it wil make hym hool anoon. And this bawme is solde to pylgrymes of dyverse cuntrees, and so it is bore thorugh dyvers londes aboute. But this bawme is nothinge so vertuous ne so goode as ys the bawme that droppithe oute of the roddys whanne they ben cutte. For and a man take a droppe of this bawme, and lay it on hys honde, anon it rennethe thoroughoute the tother side, and that place shall nevere be corrupte ne rote aftir. And this bawme is as though it were thynne grene wyne a litil troublid, and this bawme is callyd rawe bawme, and the tother is callid soden bawme. Manye moo vertues ben of this bawme, the whiche were to longe to reherce here; but alle the men in the Este bileeven treuliche that this place hath suche a vertue of growynge of bawme, bycause oure lady dwellide in the same place vij. yere, and, as it is aforeseid, she wysshe and bathid hir sone in the same welles and wasshed her clothis and her sones clothis in the same watere.

Forthurmore, ye shulle understonde, as it is aforeseide, that Melchior, kynge of Nubye and of Arabye, offrede to God a rounde appel of golde, and xxx. gilt penyes. Of these xxx. gilt penyes ye shulle here the bigynnynge and the last endynge. Thara, that was fader of Abraham, dide make these xxx. gilt penyes in the name of the kynge of Mesopotanye, the whiche was callid Ninus. And this Abraham, whanne he wente a pilgrymage oute off the londe of Chaldee into Ebroun that in thilk time was callyde Arabye, he bare thes xxx. penyes withe hym, and bought with hem a place for his sepulture, and for his wyf, and for his children, Isaak and Jacob. Aftirward Joseph was solde of his bretheren into Egypte to marchauntes of Ismaely for the same xxx. gilt penyes. Aftirward, whanne Jacob was dede, thanne were thes xxx. gilt penyes sent into the londe of Saba for diverse spices and oynementis for the sepulcre of Jacob, and so they were putte into the kyngis tresonry. Thanne by processe of tyme, as in kynge Salomones tyme, the quene of Saba offrede these xxx. gilt penyes with manye othir rich jewellis in the temple of God in Jerusalem. So aftirward in the time of Roboam, that was kynge Salomone's sone, whanne Jerusalem]* was destroyed and the temple of God dispoyled, than these xxx^{ti} gilt pens were brought to the kyng of Arabie, with mony other rich ornamentis, that were brought oute of the temple of God. Than afteward, whan Crist was bore in Bethlem, Melchior, that was kyng of Nube and of Arabie, toke these xxx^{ti} gilt pens and mony other riche jewels, bycause it was the fynest gold, and the best that he had in his tresour: therefore he toke those same with hym, and offerd hem to God in Bethlem, theras he was bore. Than afterward oure lady Seint Marie yede oute of Bethlem into Egipt for drede of kyng Herode; than she lefte alle thes yftes in the way that were offred, and they were alle bonde in a cloth togeder. So afterward it happed there was a sheperd in that contrey that kept shepe, the which had so gret infirmite and dissese that ther myght no leche hele hym, and alle the good he had he yaffe to diverse leches to be hole, and it myght not be: than on a tyme, as he yede in the felde with his shepe, nowe in one place, nowe in another, he found these xxx^{ti} gilt pens, with encense and mirre bounde in a cloute togedyr; and when he had founde thes yftes, he kept hem privyliche to hym self, tille a litelle afore the tyme that God yede to his passion; and whan this sheperde herd speke of such an holy prophete that heled alle men of her infirmites with one worde, he come, and God Almighty heled hym anon, and enformed hym of the faith; than the sheperde offred to God these xxx^{ti} gilt pens, with encense and mirre, as they were bounde alle togedyr in a cloute. Whan God see these xxx^{ti} pens with encense and mirre, he knew hem welle, and bade the sheperde that he shuld goo into the temple, and offer all these yftes uppon the awter. And so the sheperd did after his commaundement, and offred hem uppon the awter in the temple, with the encense and mirre, with gret devotion; and whan the prest that kept that tyme the temple se suche oblation offred uppon the auter in oblation, he was revesshid and encensed the auter, bycause that such oblations were but seldom sene in the temple; and the prest of the temple toke alle these iij. things, and put hem into the comen tresore; and a litell while after, that is to say the iij^{de} day to-fore Cristis passion, Judas Scarioth come into the temple, and made covenaunt with hem to betray his maister Crist Jhesu; and for his travayle, the princes of the Jewes toke oute these xxx^{ti} pens, and yaffe hem to Judas Scarioth. And so this Judas sold Jhesu Crist his maister for these xxx^{ti} gilt pens. Than, whan alle this was doo, and Crist Goddis son of heven was betrayed through his disciples, and shuld be dede for all mankynd, as his will was, than this Judas repented hym, and was sory for his misdede, and yede into the temple ayene to the princes of the Jewes, and cast downe the xxx^{ti} gilt pens; and as the Gospell seith, he yede and heng hym selfe. So that than the Jewes boute with xv. of thes gilt pens a felde for a sepulture of pilgrimes, as the Gospell telleth, and the other

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* The part between [ ] is added from another copy of this legend, MS. Cotton. Titus A. xxv., it being torn out of the Harleian MS.

xv. pens the Jewes yaffe to the knyghtes that kepte the sepulture of Crist. Also ye shall understonde that the likenesse of the same xxx^{ti} pens were used in all the contrey both in name and in monye frome Abrahams tyme into the destruction of Jerusalem, the which was do by Titus and Vespasianus; but frome the tyme of Abrahame unto Cristis passion thes xxx^{ti} gilt pens were never disceyvered ne departid, but evermore they were bore hole togedyr; and whan Crist was sold for hem, than anone they were disceyvered and departed aboute in diverse places. Ferthermore, the cause that these xxx^{ti} gilt pens were clepid silver in the Gospell, notwithstondyng they were fyne gold, is this: for it is the comon name and the comon usage in alle the contrey so for to clepe hem, as men clepe in this contrey gold of beyonde the see, scutes, motus, or florens, and yet in the Est the same prent is made both in gold and in coper, and kept among gret lordes of the contrey. The print of these pens is this: on the one side is a kyngis hed crowned, and on that other side be writt letters of Caldee, the whiche men cannot now rede; and one of them is as moch worth in wight and in valure as iij. florens; and mony merveles be tolde of these xxx^{ti} gilt pens, the which were long to tell. Also, whan oure lady and Joseph were warned to come oute of Egipt by an aungell, as the Gospell telleth, then they were bidd to goo into Galilee, and ther they dwellid in a cite that is clepid Nazareth, and so the prophecie was fulfilled, *Qui Nazarenus vocabitur*; that is to say, he schall be clepid a man of Nazareth. And what Crist did and wrought in erth fro the tyme of his byrth unto his passion, the Evangelist declareth opinly i-nough.

Whan oure lord Jhesu Crist was stied up into heven, than he sent Seint Thomas his apostell into Ynde, to prech their Goddes worde, in the which Ynde, as it is aforesaide, these iij. kynges reigned and were lordes. And ye shall understonde that this was do of gret providence and the gret mercy of God that this apostelle that put his hand into Goddis side to knowe that he was verrey God and man that was arisen up fro deth to lyf for salvation of alle mankinde, he shuld goo and prech the passion of Crist, his resurrection, and his assention, to these iij. worshipfull kynges that sought oure lord Jhesu Crist in Bethlem, in his nativite, and ther with yfftes worshipped hym, and as Seint Gregorie saith: *Quod nobis omnibus prosit quod hi reges et he gentes ejusdem domini nostri Jhesu Cristi infanciam quesierunt et oculis viderunt et devotissime muneribus adoraverunt*, &c.; that is to say, This was to us alle prophet that theise worshipfull kynges and her peple sought the childeren of Crist, and with her eyen sigh it, and with yftes worshipfulliche and devouteliche honoured it, and for soth proved it. Ferthermore, ye shall understonde that Seint Bartelmewe, Symeon, and Judas, that were Cristis disciples, were also sent into Ynde to preche the faith of God among alle peple; for ther be mony parties of Ynde, and one part of Ynde is more than all the parties of the world on this half the see, ther Cristendome is, for ther is no more destroyed and acompted in alle the Est but a c. dayes journaye.

After that Seint Thomas the apostell, in the kyngdomes of Ynde, had preched Goddis worde, and had goo aboute all the iles and provinces, and by hym God had shewed mony myracles through signe of the croiss and of Goddis worde, as in heling of sike men of all maner infirmitees, and delivering men that were traveyled or turmented with wilde sprites, than as he yede aboute in the temples, he founde a sterre in every temple paynted and fowrmed after the sterre that appered to the iij. kyngis whan Crist was bore, in the which sterre was a singe of the crosse and a childe above; and whan Seint Thomas sighe this sterre, he asked the bisshoppes of the temple what it was, and the bisshoppes told to Seint Thomas howe that such a sterre of olde tyme appered on the hill of Vaws in token of a child that was bore and shuld be kyng of Jewes, as it was herde oute of the same sterre, and for this cause the iij. kyngis yede oute of her londes into Bethlem in xiij. dayes, and ther offred to this child that was bore, but with gret travayle afterwarde they come home into her londes and kyngdomes in ij. yere, and of all that these iij. kyngis had do, herd, or seye the bisshoppes of the temple told to Seint Thomas the Apostell, and whan Seint Thomas herd alle this he thanked God, and with gret joye preched to the bisshoppes and to the peple Cristis childhode, his passion, his resurrection, and his ascension, and alle the workes of Criste while he was in erth; wherethrough the bisshoppes of the temples, and mony other folkes, were convertid to Crist, and were cristened. Ferthermore, Seint Thomas mekely declared and expounded to all the peple the understondyng of this sterre, and of the crosse, and of the childe, and he kest oute of her temples alle mawmettis, and halowed hem in worship and the name of the child that was bore, as it is aforesaid; and so moch a fame begon to rise in alle the contrey aboute of Seint Thomas for the gret miracles that he wrought, that all maner of folke that had ony infirmitees or turmentyng of wicked sprites, they come to Seint Thomas, and he, in the name of Crist and through the signe of the crosse, heled hem and converted hem, and they that were so converted to Crist did mony miracles through signe of the croisse afterwarde in diverse places ther as Seint Thomas had not be, &c.

Whan Seint Thomas had this preched and teched the peple as it is afore said, than he yede to the kyngdomes of these iij. kyngis, and founde hem hole of body and of a gret age; and as Symeon had answere of the holigoost, that he shuld not dye tylle he had seye Crist Goddis sone, and so abode hym tylle he was brought into the temple, and ther to bere hym in his armes, right so these iij. kyngis prayed to God that they shuld not dye till they were renewed with the holigoost, and with the sacrament of baptime. So whan they herde of such a man that was a disciple of Crist was come into her londes, which that was clepid Thomas, that preched to the peple the children of God, of his passion, his resurrection, and the workes that Crist wrought in this world, and specially the sacrament of baptyme, anon, notwithstondyng they were of a gret age and feble, yet thay arrayed hem and come alle iij. to Seint Thomas, with other lordes and gret multitude of peple, and Seint Thomas, with gret joye and reverence, resceyved thes worshipfull kyngis and declared to hem alle that Crist teched here on erth to his disciples, and his passion that he suffred for alle mankynde, and howe he aroos fro deth to lyffe the iij^d day, and howe he assended into heven, and also howe he sent downe the holigoost to his apostelles, and mony other articles of the faith Seint Thomas declared and expownded to these iij. kyngis, and specially he tolde of the sacrament of baptyme, withoute the which ther may no man come to the kyngdome of hevene. And whan thei were this enformed of cristen faith, Seint Thomas cristened these iij. kyngis and all the peple that come with hem, and anon these iij. kyngis were fulfilled of the holigoost, and begun anon to prech with Seint Thomas Goddis worde, and also thei tolde to the peple howe thei had sought Crist, Goddis sone, in Bethlem, in his nativite, as it is aforesaide. So than whan this was doo theis iij. kyngis, with alle the peple, yede with Seint Thomas the apostell to the hille of Vaws, and ther Seint Thomas halowed the chapell that was made on the hill by these iij. kyngis; and ther Seynt Thomas and the iij. kyngis preched ayen to the peple of cristen byleve, and of the sterre that appered to the iij. kyngis, and such a joye and a gladnesse was among the peple, and also such a loos and a name was arisen in all the londes aboute of Seint Thomas, and of these iij. kyngis, that alle maner of peple, both of men and women, come fro diverse contreys for gret devotion; and for gret concours that was made to this chapell, that these iij. kyngis did make under this hill a gret rich citee, and that citee is clepid the citee of Sewill, and this cite is the best and the richest citee in alle the contrey of the Est in Ynde, and in all the Est into this day; and in this citee is the habitation of Preter Johan, that is clepid lord of Ynde, and ther dwelleth also the patriarch of Ynde, that is clepid Thomas, and why the patriarch of Ynde is clepid Thomas, and whye the lord of Ynde is cleped Preter Johan, ye shalle here afterwarde.

Whan Seint Thomas the Apostell thus preched and converted the peple to the lawe of Crist, than he sacride and ordeined these iij. kyngis into prestes, and afterward into archbisshoppes, and when they were put in this degre, than they ordeyned under hem bisshoppes, prestis, and clerkis, to serve

God; and than these iij. kyngis halowed alle the temples in the contrey aboute, in the worship of oure lady, and cast oute all the mawmettis that were in the temples aboute in the contrey, and to the bisshoppes, prestes, and clerkis these iij. kyngis archbisshoppis yaffe mony gret poscescions to meynteyne and encrese Goddis service. And Seint Thomas teched these iij. kyngis archbisshoppes, and other bisshoppes and prestes, the maner and the fowrme to sing messe; and he enformed hem also the wordes that Crist said to his disciples whan he made his soper the nyght he was betrayed, throwghe which wordis he ordeined the sacrament of the auter. Also he teched hem the pater noster, and mony other thingis; he told hem also the forme of baptysing, and specially he charged that they shuld never forgete that. And when Seint Thomas had enformed hem this of the Cristen faith, than afterwarde he toke martirdome for Cristes love, as it is conteyned more fullych in the boke that is written of his passion, where he telleth how he was slayne, and in what place; but ye shall understonde that in alle the contrey aboute there Seint Thomas was slayne, both men and women have visages after houndes, but they be not herye, and that is yet into this day, &c.

After the deth of Seint Thomas, than thes iij. kyngis and archbisshoppes yede aboute citees, townes, and other diverse places, and ordeyned mony chirches and put in hem bisshoppis, prestes, and clerks, and other ministers of holy chyrch, to do devyne service, and they yaf to hem mony gret possescions; and than these iij. kyngis and archbissoppes forsoke the vanitees of the world and ordeynid mony clerkis to abide in the cite that is clepid Sewill, the which they had do make, and assigned certeyne lordis to governe and to rewle her kyngdomes and her londes both in spirituall degre and in temporall degre, and the peple of gret love and charite were obbeysaunt to hem as the son to the fader. Than the yere byfore her deth theise iij. kyngis and archbisshops made a convocation of all the peple, both temporall and spirituall, and had hem alle into one place, and they warned and conseled all the peple that they shuld be perseveraunt in the cristen faith that Seint Thomas had taught hem.

Ferthermore they counseled the peple that they shuld all of one acorde and of one will chese among hem a man that were abill and discrete and that had love and hertly desyre to meynteyne the Cristen faith, the which man shuld be chose before alle other men as in spirituallite in Seint Thomas stede, and to hym al maner men shuld obbey as to her goostly fader, the which man also in the worschip of Seint Thomas shuld be clepid a patriarch Thomas, for an everlastyng memoriall; and whan the patriarch were dede, than they shuld come togedyr alle into one place, and in his stede they shulde chese another, to whome, as it is aforesaide, they shuld obbey as to ther goostlye fader. Than whan this matere was this spoken among the peple they assented therto, and of one acorde and of one will alle these bisshoppes, prestes, and clerkis, and all other peple, anon they chase a man that was clepid Jacob, which was come oute of Antioche, and had allwey folowed Seint Thomas the apostell into Ynde; and this Jacob the peple chese and toke for her patriarch, and chaunged his name and clepid hym Thomas; and this man was the fyrst patriarch that was in all the contrey. And so allwey they of Ynde be obbeysaunt to the patriarch Thomas, as we be to the pope unto this day. And to this patriarch theis iij. kyngis yaff and assigned to hym for evermore by assent of the peple the titles of all her londes and kyngdomes.

And whan all this was do, and the patriarch Thomas was chosen, as it is aforesaide, to be fader and lorde of the peple in spirituallite, than theis iij. kyngis and archbisshoppes of comon assent of all the peple chosen and ordeined a worshipfull man and a myghty, that shuld be lord and cheff governoure among the peple in temporalite; and for this cause, if ony man wold arise or atempt ayenst the patriarch Thomas or bisshoppes or prestes ayen the lawe of God, and yff it so were that the patriarch myght not rewle hem by spirituall lawe, than shuld this lord chastice hem by temporall lawe; and this lord shuld not be clepid a kyng or an emperoure, but they ordeyned that he should be clepid Preter Johan; and the cause is this, for there is no degre in the world above the degre of presthode, for all the world ought to obbey to holy-chirch and to presthode in spirituallite. Also another cause is this, that the lorde of Ynde is cleped Preter Johan, in worship of Seint Johan evangelist, that was a prest, and most speciallich chose and loved of Crist Jhesu; of whome another cause is for Seint Johan the Baptist that baptised Crist Jhesu, as it is redde, that among all the children that were of women borne, was this none gretter than Seint Johan the Baptist. Whan all this was doo, theis iij. kyngis, the patriarch Thomas, and Preter Johan, the one to be cheffe lorde in temporallite and the other to be cheffe governoure in spirituallite for evermore, to whome all peple did obbedience with dewe reverence and gret gladnesse to theire power, and had submitted thame to the governaunce off these lordis aforesaide; than every man yede home ayene into his owne contrey, and so these lordis and governours of Ynde he cleped the same names, that is to saye, Patriarch Thomas and Preter Johan.* [Whanne alle these thingis were thus disposed and ordeynede by thes worthy kynges, thanne thei yede into the citee of Sewille aforeseide, and a litill to-fore the feste of the Nativite of oure Lord Jhesu Crist, ther apperede a wonderfull sterre aboute the cittee, by the whiche sterre they understode that her tyme was nye that they shuld passe oute of this worlde unto everlastynge joye of hevene. Thanne of oon assent thei ordeynede a fair and a large tombe for her sepulture, in the same chirche that they had made in the citee, and in the feste of Cristemas these three kyngis and erchebisshopes deden solempnely Goddys servyce, and so in the feste of Circumcisioun Melchior, that was kynge of Arabye and of Nubye, seide a masse solempnely in the chirche, and whanne he had seide his masse to-fore alle the puple, he leyde hym doun and withouten any dissese he yolde up the spyrit to the Fader of hevene, and so deide in the yere of his age an c. and xvj. And thanne come the tothir ij. kyngis and toke his body, and anewed it with bysshopys clothis and kyngis ornamentes, and bare hym to this tombe, and with grete devocioun leyde hym therynne. Thanne in the feste of the Epiphanye Balthasar, that was kyng of Godeby and of Saba, seide devoutelye his masse, and whanne he had seide his masse withouten any grevaunce, as the wille of God was, he deide and passyd to everlastynge joye, in the yere of his age, an c. and xij. And thanne Jasper, the thridde kynge, toke up hys body, and whanne it was arayede as it shuld be, he leyde hym by the tothir kynge in the same tombe. Thanne the vj^{te} day aftir this, Jasper, that was kynge of Tharce and of the ile of Egreswelle, whanne he had also with devocioun seide hys masse, thanne Crist toke hym hys spiryt into everlastynge joye, and thanne puple come and toke his body, and arrayde it worschipfully, and bere it into the same tombe thereas the tothere ij. kyngis lien. And this wonderfulle myracle Criste schewid there to-fore alle puple, whanne the body of the thridde kynge was brought and shulde be leyd in the tombe by the tothere kyngis, anone everiche of the tothere ij. kyngis departid from othir and yaven hym place to her thridde felowe, and so they resseyved hym to lye in the myddys bitwene hem bothe. And so it may be seide by thes three worschipfulle kyngis, as it is seide in holy writte, *Gloriosi principes terræ, quomodo in vita sua dilexerunt se, ita et in morte non sunt separati,* that is to saye, As thes glorouse kyngis and erchebisshopes loveden togidere in her lyf, ryght so they were noght departyd in her dethe. And so the sterre that apperede overe the citee tofore her dethe, abode allwey tylle her bodyes were translated into Coleyn, as they of Inde seyen.

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* What follows between [ ] is supplied from M.S. Cotton. Titus A. xxv.

Longe tyme aftir the dethe of thes three kyngis, whanne Cristen feithe stode and was in prosperyte in the worschipfulle citee of Sewille and in alle the kyngdomes of the Est, thanne the devell, that of all goodnes and vertues ys distroyer, thorugh his] wicked angells excityng brought up amonge the peple diverse errours and oppinions of heresie, and this persecution of heresie gretly fro day to day encresed into diverse places and londes aboute, insomoch that the kyngdomes and londes that thes iij. kyngis were lordis and kyngis of, and also the peple of the cite of Sewill where thes iij. kyngis restid in, for the most partye were devided within hem self, and helde diverse oppinions of heresie ayenst the faith of holy chirch, insomoche that Preter Johan and the patriarch Thomas myght not rewle the peple ne revoke hem from her heresies by no spirituall ne temporall correction; and in this persecution that was this brought up among the peple ayen the Cristen faith, the peple left her right byleve, and toke them ayene to her olde lawe, that is to say to worship fals goddis and mawmettis, and forsoke the lawe of God and of his seintis, insomoche that these iij. kynges were had at no reverence but all most foryete of the peple; and as these iij. kynges laid in her tombe incorrupt to-fore these heresies, right so whan this heresie and this division was so gretly encresid in her kyngdomes ther they were kyngis, that as nature of mankynde asketh the bodies of these iij. kynges were disolved and turned into erth, and so in this tyme the peple that were dwellyng in the cite of Sewill, the which were come oute of the londis and kyngdomes of thes iij. kyngis, every party toke his kyng oute of his tombe, and closed hem in diverse chestes honestly, every by hem self, and bare hem home into her owne londes and kyngdomes, with gret solempnite and worship, every lond resceyved the body of his kyng, and ther they were long tyme after.

Whan the glorious emperoure Constantyne, through the grace of God and diverse miracles, was convertid to Crist be Seint Silvester, and was made clene of his leper, and was chaunged both in his lyfe and in his maners into a newe man, that is to say into the lawe of Crist; and in the same tyme Seint Elyne the quene, that was moder to Constantyne aforesaide, was conversaunt and dwellyng among the Jewes, and she was alle defect and defouled with the Jewes lawes and with her beleve, but wonderlich she was convertid to the lawe of Crist, as it is writt in the storie of the fyndyng of the holy crosse: and as this holy quene before her conversion to Crist was a gret and a strong enemie to the lawe of Crist and to the faith, right so after her conversion she was the grettest prechoure of Goddis lawe in alle that contrey ther as she was conversaunt in, for alle the holy places that oure lord Jhesu Crist in his manhede had halowed with his blissid body thrughe his walkyng here in erth, the which places this holy quene sum tyme throughe information of the fals Jewes held for cursed and odious places, all thes places this worshipfulle quene to the worship of God and his blessid moder Marie, with gret devotion visited and worshipped after alle these holy places, that is to say the hille of Calvarie, ther Crist was done on the crosse and died for mankynde, and the place ther Crist committed his moder into the kepyng of St. Johan the Evangelist whan he hengh on the crosse, and the place ther Crist after his uprisyng fro deth to lyf in the iij^{de} day appered to Marie Mawdelyn in likenesse of a gardener, alle thes places and mony other holy places this worshipfull quene comprehended with one chirch, and a riall and a worshipfull chyrch, above alle these places aforsaide. Also in other diverse places she made mony chirches, and ordeined archbisshoppes, bisshoppes, prestis, and clerkis, and other ministers of holy chirch to serve God, and she yaffe mony gret poscessions to meynteyne and encrese Goddis service.

Ferthermore, this holy quene yede into the place ther the angell appered to the sheperds that nyght that Crist was bore, and in the same place she did make a worshipfull and a riall chirch, to the which she yaffe a name *Gloria in excelsis,* that is so clepid yet into this day; and in this chirch was sum tyme a gret colage of chanons, the which of spiritual privilege beginne alle her oures of the day with *Gloria in excelsis,* as we do here in this contrey with *Deus in adjutorium,* and so men use the same in that chirch. Whan Seint Elyne had made this chirch, than she yede into Bethlem into the same place ther Crist was bore of his moder Seint Marie; and as it is aforesaide, the Jewes of envie wold not suffer man, child, ne best to go into that place, for they held it a cursed place; and so fro the tyme that oure lady was gone oute of this place ther her sonne was bore till Seint Elyne was come into that place, ther never came man, child, ne best in that place; and whan Seint Eline was come into that derke place, she founde the same hey that Crist was laide in in the maungere, and the clothes that oure lord Jhesu Crist was wounde in, and oure ladies smocke, and all these thingis oure lady had foryete behynd her whan she yede oute of that place into Egipt, the which Seint Eline founde togeder fayre and hole in the mangere; and alle thes holy reliques Seint Elyne toke away with her, saffe the maungere, and bare hem to Constantyne the noble, and ther with all reverence and solempnite put hem in a worshipfull chirche that is clepid the chirch of Seint Phophie, and ther these reliques were kept unto the tyme that a king of Fraunce, which was clepyd Carolus, came to Jerusalem, and into other cristen citees aboute, with gret oost, and ther did mony gret batailes ayenst the Sarezins, and delivered oute of her prisone all cristen men that long tyme had ley there; and whan he had this do, he yede home by Constantyne the noble. And ther he sighe alle thes reliques aforesaid, and throughe gret prayer he had alle thes reliques, and bere hem home with hym into his kyngdome of Fraunce, and put hem in a worshipfull chirche that is made in worship of oure lady, the whiche is clepid Acon: ther is oure ladis smocke, and the other reliques, worshipped and visitede of Cristen peple of diverse londes aboute, yet into this day.

Ferthermore, Seint Eline did make a chirche, right a faire, above the same place ther Crist was bore, and in the same place that he was bore beside the mangere lith Seint Jerome, Paula, Eustochym in Romayns, the which of gret devotion came theder with Seint Jerome. Whan Seint Elene had made these chyrches, than she yede to the cite of Nazareth, which is a faire cite, and ther she made also a fayre chirch, and ordeined bisshoppes, prestis, and clerkys, and mony other ministers of holy chirche therin, and yaffe hem mony gret possessions to meynteyn devine service: and in the cite of Nazareth oure lady was grett of an angell; and this cite of Nazareth is in the lond and lordship of Galile, and beside this Galile is the hill which is clepid Tabor, and on this hill oure lord was transfigrede to-fore iij. of his disciples, Peter, Johan, and James, as the Gosspell telleth, and this hill is but litell of brede, but it is wonderlyche highe, and it is fro Jerusalem iij. dayes jornay and a half; and betwexst Jerusalem and this hille Tabor was a way that Crist yede with his disciples often here in erth, and preched and taught, and did miracles, and ferther yede he not, as it is saide, but in his manhede than these ij. places aforesaid that were betweste hem.

Whan this worshipfull quene Sent Eline had this viseted alle these holy places, and ordeined clerkis and other ministers to serve God and to do divine service, as it is aforesaide, and all thing was performed after hyr will to the worship of God, than she began to thinke gretly on the bodyes of these iij. kyngis that had sought God and worshipped hym in his childhode. And than this lady arrayed hyr with a certeyn of peple, and yede into the lond of Ynde; and whan she was come into this lond she distroyed alle her sinagoges and her fals goddis and mawmettis, and did make chirches and monasteries, and ordeyned in hem prestes and clerkis of cristen faith, and also she preched the cristen faith among the peple, insomoche that the faith that was preched by Seint Thomas the apostle and the iij. kyngis, the which through heresie was stroyed, was ennewed and encresid ayen throughe hyr prechyng; for alle the peple, whan they herd what miracles oure Lord Jhesu Crist wrought by this worshipfull quene, and of the fyndyng of the holy crosse, and of the nailes, and of our ladies smocke, and of the hey and the clothes that Crist was wounde in in his childhode, they come to hyr and worshipped hyr, and forsoke her fals lawe, and toke hem to the lawe of Crist, as Seint Eline taught hem. Than whan this was do, she began gretly to enquere for the reliques of thes iij. kyngis, and with gret travaile yede aboute to yete hem.

So oure Lord Jhesu Crist, that is ever redy to al men that cry to hym in truth and in rightfulnesse, as he shewed to this holy quene the holy crosse, and the nailes that were hid depe in the erth, right so he shewed the bodyes of thes iij. kyngis to hyr, and so this lady had such a loos among alle the peple, that the patriarch Thomas and Preter Johan, with consell of other princes and lordes, yaff to this lady Seint Elyne the ij. bodies of the ij. kyngis, Melchior and Baltazar, to the worship of God and of the holy kyngis; the body of the iij^{de} kyng Jasper the Nestories had bore it into the ile of Egripwell. And bycause that Seint Eline wold not that the iij^{de} kynge shuld be departed, she made gret meanes and gret prayoures, and also yaffe gret yftes to the cheff lord of this ile of Egripwill, and so she gate the iij^{de} body, that is to say Jasper, and for this body she yaffe to hem the body of Seint Thomas the apostell, the which she had that tyme in hyr kepyng, and this body of Seint Thomas hath be twyes bere away fro the ile, and alway restored ayene for certeyne causes. And ye shall understond that in all the Est is ther no cristenman sith that tyme that hath be in the ile of Egripwille theras Seint Thomas the apostle lieth that hath sey this body, for it is common prophecie in alle that contrey that the body of Seint Thomas the apostle schalbe translated into the cite of Coleyne, and put in to the iij. kyngis, and in what maner this shalbe do they telle, and sey that in tyme commyng whan God will ther shalbe an archebishoppe of Coleyne, and he shalbe so wise and so myghty, that he shall make a contracte bytwene the emperoures sonne of Rome and the emperoures doughter of Tartarie, and at this contracte and frendship the holy lond shalbe yolden into cristemennis handis, and in this tyme shalle the body of Seint Thomas be translated and be bore into Coleyne and laid by the iij. kyngis, and therfore the heritikes of this ile, the which is clepid Nestorii, toke but litell kepe of his body, ne thay do hym no reverence bycause of this prophecie. Than whan Seint Eline had brought the iij^{de} body, that is to saie Jaspers, to his ij. felaus, than was such a swete savoure of thes iij. kyngis, that alle the peple of the contrey aboute were replete therwith; and than Seint Eline put thes iij. kyngis togedyr in one chest, and arraied it with gret riches, and brought hem into the citee of Constantyne the noble, with alle joye and reverence, and ther they were put into a chirche, the which is clepid Seint Phofie. And this chirch king Constantynenoble ded make, and he allome with help of God and of a litell child set up alle the pelers of marble in the same chirch, and in this chirch was that tyme the crowne of thornne that Crist was crowned with; and whan the Turkis and Sarisins come down into Constantyne noble and destroyed it, than gret part therof the emperoure sent to Seint Lewes, that than was kyng of Fraunce, for socour and help, and this kyng Lowes than came with a strong peple to the emperour and recovered ayen the most partie of the londes that the emperour had lost. And for his travaile the emperour yaffe hym the crowne of thorne, wherefore the Grekes made moch sorowe; and so the Grekis with gret lamentation foryede it. And the Frenschemen with gret joye bare this crowne out of Constantynenoble into Parise. And ye shalle understonde that Constantynenoble is the cheff cite of Grece. And whan these iij. bodies of these iij. kyngis were brought into the citee and chirch aforesaide, than alle the peple of all the contrey aboute come and visited hem, and with gret devotion worshipped hem, and ther they were kept long tyme, and oure lord Jhesu Crist, of his gret mercy, wrought ther mony miracles throughe the merites of these iij. kyngis. After the deth of this worshipfull kyng Constantyne and his moder Seint Eline aforesaide, ther begane ayen a new persecution of heresie ayenst the cristen faith, and also a persecution of deth ayenst hem that wold meynteyne the faith and the lawe of Crist; and in this persecution and tribulation the Grekis, though it so were that they had mony worshipfull doctors and bisshoppes of the same contrey of Grece borne, yet they forsoke the right way, and the lawe of holy chirch, and the articles of the faith, and chose hem a patriarch by hem selfe, to whom they obbey yet into this day as we do to the pope; and in this persecution the bodies and the reliques of these iij. holy kyngis were put at no reverence, but utterly set at nought, and so these Sarasins and Turkes wonne the londes of Grece and of Ermonye, and destroyed a gret parte of these londis. And than came an emperour of Rome, the which was clepid Mauricius, and throughe help of hem of Melon he recovered all these londes ayene; and as it is saide among men in that contrey ther, through counsell of the same emperour, thes iij. kyngis were translated into Melon. Ferthermore, it is redde in divers bokis in that contrey that ther was an emperour of Grece, the which was clepid Emanuell, and this emperour sent a religious man, the which was clepid Eustrogens, into Melone on a certeyne message, and than this religious man askede the emperoure to have thes iij. bodies. Because that the emperour loved well this man he graunted hym these iij. bodies; and so this Eustrogens sent thes bodies into Melon, and laid hem ther in a faire chyrch, the which is cleped the freer prechours, with all solempnite and worship, and oure lord Jhesu Crist, throughe the merites of these iij. kingis, wrought mony miracles, &c.

Than afterward, by processe of tyme, it fortuned that the cite of Melon began to rebelle ayenst the emperoure, which was clepid Frodoricus, and this Emperour sent to the archebisshop of Colne, the which was clepid Reinold, for help. Than this archbisshop of Colne, through help of diverse lordis of the lond of Melon, distroyed a gret part therof; and in this tyme the gret men of the citee toke the bodies of these iij. kyngis and hid hem privyly in the erth; and among all other in this cite ther was a lord that was clepid Asso, and the emperour hated this Asso more than all the peple of the cite; and so it happed, in this distruction of the cite, the archebisshop wanne this lordis paleis through strong honde, and lay therin a gret while, and this Asso was take and put into prisone. Than this Asso sent priveliche by his kepers to the archebissop of Colon, and prayed hym that he might come speke with hym; and this archbisshop graunted that he shuld come to hym. So whan he was come to the archbisshop, he behight hym, yff he wolde get hym grace of the emperoure, and his lond and his lordship, he wold yeffe hym the bodies of the iij. kyngis; and whan the archbishop hard this, anon he yede to the emperoure and prayed for hym, and gate hym grace and good lordship of the emperoure; and whan this was do, than this lord Asso brought privatly the iij. bodies of the kyngis to the archbisshop; and then the archbisshop send thes bodies forth priveliche by a prevy meyne a gret way oute of the citee of Melon, and than he yede to the emperour, and prayed hym that he wold graunt hym thes iij. bodies. And the emperour graunted with gode will, for the archbisshopp wold not speke to-fore, for he was in doute whether the emperour wold graunt hym this asking or none; and than the archebisshop opynly, with gret solempnite and gret procession, brought thes holy seintes bodies into Coleyne, and ther he put hem in a fayre chirch off Seint Peter worshipfully, and alle the peple of the contrey, with alle the reverence that they might, resceyved this holy relyques, and ther they be kept and worshipped of alle maner of nacions into this, and mony miracles oure Lord Jhesu Crist, through the prayers and merites of thes iij. worshipfull kyngis, every day shewet ther to all cristen peple. And thus endeth the translation of thes iij. worshipfull kyngis.

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